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CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK	447	Restoration Tragedy	461
THE COAL PROBLEM NOW	450	Three War Books. By Bonamy Dobrée	462
PARLIAMENTARY NOTES. By Erimus	451	A Lesson for Parents	463
A LESSON IN TACT. By MacFlecknoe	453	Two Historians	463
CREEPING PARALYSIS	453	Malory as Moralist	464
LIFE AND POLITICS. By Kappa	454	NOVELS IN BRIEF	464
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Bureaucracy (Ramsay Muir); Those "Patient Oxen" (Edward Marjoribanks, M.P.); Virginia Woolf Upon Women (Frances M. Orr); Christianity and Puritanism (A Would-be Puritan); The Dolmetsch Foundation (Robert Bridges and Others); On the Eve of Stephen (Francis P. Marchant)	455-457	AUCTION BRIDGE. By Caliban	464
KITTY—A PONY. By Morys Gascoyen	457	FINANCIAL SECTION:—	
PLAYS AND PICTURES. By Omicron	459	The Week in the City	466
HANDS. Poem by Marie de L. Welch	459		
THE WORLD OF BOOKS:—			
On the Bench and in the Dock. By Leonard Woolf	460		
REVIEWS:—			
The Stricken Deer. By Dorothy Margaret Stuart	461		

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE division on the Coal Mines Bill last week will probably prove to be a turning-point in the history of the present Parliament. The result was remarkable in many ways. Although no one really wished to see the Government defeated, the two Opposition parties voted against the Bill as heavily as they could possibly have done if this had been their passionate desire. Stung by reproaches at the exceptionally slack attendances which previous divisions had revealed, the Conservative Whips made every effort to bring their members to Westminster, and the Conservative M.P.s made every effort to respond. The Liberal vote was equally uninfluenced by the desire to avoid precipitating a first-rate political crisis. The two Liberals who voted for the Bill were moved, not by tactical considerations, but by pledges to their constituents, and the handful who abstained did so on the ground of a qualified approval of the Bill upon its merits. Altogether, the Liberals voted about as strongly and solidly against the Bill as they are likely to vote against any measure which the present Government are likely to introduce. In these circumstances, the Government's majority of eight was a remarkable Parliamentary achievement, which suggests, on the face of it, that, for tactical purposes, they are very virtually in the position, after all, of commanding an independent majority in the House of Commons.

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On the other hand, they certainly do not possess what Parliamentarians call a working majority; and they would need a good working majority to carry the Coal Mines Bill into law, in anything like its present shape, in face of the declared attitude of both the other

parties. Indeed, we should be faced with a constitutional phenomenon of a highly disconcerting kind, if it were possible for a Government to pass Bills into law in teeth of the strong opposition of parties commanding a majority of the House of Commons, merely by virtue of a higher quota of attendance. It follows, as it seems to us inexorably, that the Government must either drop their Bill or reshape it sufficiently to make it more or less acceptable to one at least of the other parties. It is extremely difficult for the Government, with their commitments to the miners, to adopt the former course. It is highly distasteful to them to adopt the latter. We must, therefore, reckon with the possibility, that they may seek a way out of the dilemma by seeking a dissolution fairly early next year, after the London Conference, if this yields success and kudos, and before the Budget. Labour thoughts are certainly turning in this direction—witness the article in the DAILY HERALD, entitled "Labour is Ready," which conforms, as the title suggests, to the most approved jingo pattern. We do not, however, rate this possibility very high. Certainly, there could be no less promising issue for an election than the Coal Mines Bill. The issue this week by Mr. Graham of the answers which the Government had intended to offer to the Liberals during the debate suggests that the Government have decided to pursue the course of amending the Bill so as to reconcile the Liberals to it. But these answers are so vague that the fate of the Bill and the fate of the present Parliament remain highly uncertain.

* * *

It is now announced that the Five-Power Naval Conference will be opened by the King in person on January 21st. Meanwhile, the difficulty of its task be-

comes more and more apparent. The debate on the French naval estimates began on December 19th, and resolved itself from the first into a discussion of the Conference. M. Dumesnil, the *rapporteur*, confined himself mainly to arguing the need of France for a larger fleet than that contemplated by the present programme, but M. Paul-Boncour followed with a rancorous attack on British policy; declaring, amidst the cheers of the Chamber, that the preliminary understanding between Great Britain and the United States was an obstacle to further progress, and that it was Great Britain who had always blocked the French proposals for global limitation. The forces of obstructive criticism were subsequently strengthened by M. Herriot's speech. The ex-Premier maintained that Germany had just built a vessel which was the "terror of the world's navies" (the world's navies are not so easily alarmed as M. Herriot), and argued vehemently against concluding any binding agreement on disarmament except at Geneva. M. Leygues then made the important statement that the Government regarded the London Conference as a preliminary to a general disarmament Conference at Geneva, and this seems to have been confirmed by MM. Briand and Tardieu.

* * *

While these discussions were taking place, the Italian Government presented a further Note, in which they maintained their claim to parity with France, but apparently qualified it by adding the words *de jure*, which might be taken to imply that they would consent to narrower limits on their actual construction. They further expressed themselves in favour of the abolition of submarines, and declared themselves ready to examine with France the possibility of a Mediterranean agreement similar to the Four-Power Pacific Pact of 1922. This last proposal might facilitate a compromise on the parity question, but would involve, presumably, the participation of Spain in the proposed Pact. The adhesion of Italy to the British and American view on submarines is likely only to increase the obstinacy of the French. Perhaps the gravest obstacle to agreement is the French Government's belief—as declared by M. Leygues—that disarmament can never be obtained "so long as the League has no international force."

* * *

Evidently these discussions have been closely followed in Washington, for Mr. Stimson at once informed the Press that any agreement reached in London must have separate and unconditional validity. The United States Government hope that it will facilitate the work of the Preparatory Commission; but they will have nothing to do with any agreement that requires the approval of Geneva to give it binding force. Mr. Stimson further emphasized the belief of the United States Navy Board in the capital ship as the "core" of naval strength, but indicated a general acquiescence in the desirability of reducing the strength in capital ships fixed at Washington, and postponing the replacement programme contemplated in the Washington Treaty. Meanwhile, the Japanese delegation has left for London, after a series of conversations in Washington which, according to a very non-committal joint communiqué, were concerned with the "general philosophy" of naval disarmament, and established agreement as regards "the objectives" of Japan and the United States. The concrete issue of Japan's demand for a 70 per cent. ratio remains to be settled at the Conference; but it is understood that it may be put forward in a rather more flexible form than was indicated by the first reports.

Christmas week in India—a critical week marked by the Viceroy's conference with the Nationalist leaders and by the opening of the National Congress in Lahore—has been ushered in, most inauspiciously, by an attempt on the Viceroy's life. The train carrying Lord and Lady Irwin had reached a point ten miles out of Delhi, when a bomb was thrown, under cover of fog, which smashed the door of the dining-car attached to the viceregal coach, and injured an attendant. The thrower of the bomb escaped in the fog. It may still be hoped that this will remain an isolated outrage, and will not be allowed to deflect the growing tendency towards conciliation and co-operation. It is impossible, however, not to feel a grave uneasiness. The section of Indian Nationalism which believes in assassination as a political weapon may be small; but it is active, and it is only too likely to take advantage, for its propaganda, of the unfortunate effect produced on public opinion in India by the recent debates in the British Parliament. The whole situation, indeed, is as full of menacing as of hopeful possibilities. On the one hand, the Viceroy's meeting with Mr. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. Jinnah, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and Mr. Patel is, in itself, a sign of an improved political atmosphere, and the European Association's resolution, supporting the Viceroy, has had a very good effect. On the other hand, the Youth Movement is growing in strength and danger, and there are grave fears of racial disturbances in Lahore, where the Congress meeting has roused the Sikhs and Hindus to fury.

* * *

The British Empire and Soviet Russia are once more officially cognizant of each other's existence. On December 20th, the Prince of Wales, acting on behalf of the King, received M. Sokolnikoff, the Soviet Ambassador; on the following day Sir Esmond Ovey presented his credentials in Moscow. Immediately after leaving St. James's Palace, M. Sokolnikoff visited the Foreign Office, and exchanged with Mr. Arthur Henderson Notes by which the two Governments agree to abstain from propaganda in each other's territories. He subsequently issued to the Press a statement laying stress on the resumption of diplomatic relations both as a contribution to world peace and as preparing the way for a greater development of trade between Russia and Great Britain. In the latter connection he emphasized the demand for both industrial and agricultural plant and machinery arising from the new programme of economic development, and was able to point to increased orders placed in Great Britain by Soviet organizations during the last two months. He skated skilfully over the financial problems to be discussed in the forthcoming negotiations, but asserted that the Soviet Government was ready to take steps towards a settlement of the claims upon it, but only on condition that counterclaims were taken into account, and that any settlement must be "directly connected with measures favourable to the further development and consolidation of the national economy of the U.S.S.R."

* * *

It is clear that the negotiations will not be easy, complicated as they are by the question of Czarist debts, the counterclaims arising from British encouragement of counter-revolutionary movements, and the hankering of Moscow after a guaranteed loan. It is clear also that the Tory Party is out to make them as difficult as possible, and they have seized eagerly the opportunity presented by Mr. Henderson's maladroit reference to seeking the approval of the Protocol by Parliament, when he meant seeking the endorsement of the Government's policy by the House of Commons. Lord Birkenhead has denounced, with that grave air

of moral superiority which so well becomes him, the Attorney-General's defence of Mr. Henderson, and has hinted plainly enough that the Conservatives will seek the first pretext for endeavouring to force a new rupture. Even the Tories, however, do not suggest that our depressed industries should refuse orders from the "enemies of God and the Empire." All they want is that we should refuse to be on speaking terms with them. Yet recent events have shown clearly the absurdity and danger of treating as an outcast a Great Power with whom, in practice, we must inevitably come into contact, and without whom no scheme for disarmament or the guarantee of peace can be fully carried out.

* * *

The general election in Egypt is not yet over; but there is now not the slightest doubt that the Wafd Party will obtain an overwhelming majority. They have already secured 153 seats out of 235. The Liberal Party abstained from taking any part in the election, apparently because of the refusal of the Wafd to make the proposed Treaty an election issue. A Wafd victory at the polls no longer means that any agreement reached provisionally between the British and Egyptian authorities will be automatically cancelled. The proposals arrived at by Mahmud Pasha and Mr. Henderson are approved by the majority of educated Egyptians, and a Treaty on these lines would probably be confirmed by an Egyptian plebiscite; but the Wafd leaders have made it clear that they desire to have the credit of compounding the Treaty, and it may be assumed that they will endeavour to secure some further concessions. If they prove to be bargaining merely for a *satisfaction d'amour propre*, the British Government and Sir Percy Lorraine should be ingenious enough to grant it without abandoning anything of value; but it must not be assumed that the situation is safe. The enormous Wafd majority in the Chamber is not likely to be wise or reasonable, and it is to that majority that the Treaty must finally be submitted.

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The Marquis de Estella has often reminded us of the man who thought he did pretty well to catch a wild boar single-handed, but wished someone would help him to let it go. He gives the impression of sincerity in his expressed desire to restore constitutional Government; but he remains an amateur in politics; he has discovered little constructive ability among his followers, and he has kept the old political parties at arms' length. His latest pronouncement is a little more hopeful. He has abandoned the idea of a change of constitution during the Dictatorship, and seems to look forward to the creation of some sort of constituent assembly, in whose hands he can safely leave the transition to a reformed Constitution. This is a distinct step forward. The old political leaders refused to have anything to do with the discussion of the draft Constitution, now dropped, not only because they objected to its provisions, but because it was to be brought into operation as an act of the Dictatorship itself. There seems to be some hope that many Liberals and Conservatives will regard this latest pronouncement as a sufficient concession to justify their co-operation in the work of constitutional reform.

* * *

A welcome feature of Mr. Thomas's speech on unemployment was his announcement that he had invited a number of Port Authorities to submit development schemes to him. It is doubtful, however, whether he has fully appreciated the importance of the report on port facilities recently presented by a joint Committee

of the Chamber of Shipping, the Association of Chambers of Commerce, and the Federation of British Industries. The Committee report favourably as to the foresight and energy shown by the larger Port Authorities in providing facilities for the quick handling and distribution of overseas trade; but the demands of modern commerce are continually increasing, and they are of opinion that urgently required and economically sound schemes of development are at present being held up by the difficulty of raising capital on favourable terms. Glasgow, Leith, Newcastle, Hull, Middlesbrough, and Swansea are specifically mentioned as ports where financial assistance from the State would permit much needed work to be put in hand. Few things are better calculated to stimulate the trade of the country as a whole than an acceleration of the flow of traffic through the ports, and the Committee justly point out that assistance to the Port Authorities would not, like shipping or export subsidies, run the risk of provoking reprisals abroad, as the ships of all nations would benefit.

* * *

It is not, however, only the great ports to which assistance is recommended. Indeed, the report is very largely concerned with the condition of the smaller ports, prominent chiefly in the coasting trade. The coasting trade has, for long, complained of unfair and uneconomic competition by land transport agencies; it was unquestionably hardly treated in the war, and it has never fully recovered from the set-back then sustained. The Committee believe, however, that by improved facilities at the smaller ports, coupled with the use of sea-going motor-barges and tank barges, the coasting trade could be enabled once more to play an adequate part both in local exchanges and in the distribution of imported products. Mr. Thomas, as a railway man, may have no special tenderness for the coaster, but it is doubtful if the railways would lose, in the long run, by anything that tended to stimulate both internal and external trade. As a means for relieving unemployment, port development has the great advantage of promising to increase, directly or indirectly, the number of workers required in a very large range of industries.

* * *

A Conference of representatives of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, the National Confederation of Employers' Organizations, and the Federation of British Industries has approved unanimously a permanent scheme for consultation and co-operation between Capital and Labour. The range of subjects which it is proposed to discuss is remarkably wide, embracing unemployment, industry and finance, taxation of industry, social services, education, delegated powers of Government departments, inter-Empire trade, international trade (including the tariff truce proposals), trade facilities, insurance of export credits, general international labour questions, and industrial and commercial statistics. Separate committees are to be set up for each question brought forward, and the two employers' organizations will maintain a permanent Allocation Committee, who will decide in respect of each subject whether it concerns the F.B.I., or the Confederation, or both. The discussions of the Committees are to be regarded as confidential, and no action will be taken on the conclusions arrived at, until it has been specifically approved by the organizations concerned. The proposals have already been approved by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, and will be submitted to the Councils of the employers' organizations at an early date. The Mond-Turner project moves slowly, but it moves.

THE COAL PROBLEM NOW

FIRST in logic, first in industrial need," declared the Prime Minister in winding up for the Government in last week's coal debate, "comes amalgamation, but nobody who has studied the intricacies of amalgamation, and the time required to complete it—and what is the use of talking about beginning?—no one who has studied the time required for the completion of amalgamation really honestly, either to himself or to this House, would say that amalgamation and the economies resulting from it can be reaped in time to enable the trade to readjust itself when the eight-hours day has ceased to exist." This passage aptly illustrates the besetting vice of the present Parliament, and, it may be, more generally, of our democratic politics. We recognize, with admirable clear-sightedness, and with a unanimity that might seem highly encouraging for the project of a Council of State, that certain things come "first in logic and first in industrial need." We set these things, as it were, upon a pedestal, declaring it to be our settled purpose to attend to them the very moment we have time at our disposal. Meanwhile, we proceed to do quite different things, which by their very nature are bound to hamper us when, if ever, we turn seriously to the things which come first in logic and first in industrial need. The present Parliament, for example, is virtually founded on the proposition that it is better to provide work than to provide doles. Yet it has done little else than to provide doles, and thus—for the connection, under present financial conditions, admits, in our judgment, of no dispute—to frustrate all Mr. Thomas's efforts to find work. The more we are agreed that something urgently needs doing, the more likely we seem, in practice, to do the opposite.

The explanation, of course, is always the pressure of some emergency, usually of a political character. Let us examine somewhat closely the nature of the emergency which has led the present Government avowedly to disregard the order indicated by logic and industrial need in their approach to the problem of the coal mines. Mr. MacDonald's account of this emergency, as contained in the above passage, is obviously incomplete. He mentions the fact that the Eight Hours Act, passed by the late Conservative Government, expires in July, 1931. This, of course, is not the whole story. The Labour Party's pledge to the miners to repeal the Eight Hours Act forthwith, and the consequent political necessity of doing something towards honouring this pledge, clearly form part, and perhaps the major part, of the emergency by which the Government are driven forward. None the less, the fact mentioned by Mr. MacDonald is highly pertinent. It constitutes an extremely important factor in the coal problem; and all parties will do wisely not to forget it for an instant in considering what it is best to do in

the curious and difficult situation resulting from last week's debate and division in the House of Commons.

On the one hand, the fact that the seven-hour day will be restored, as the law now stands, in July, 1931, adds immensely to the force of the powerful objections which were brought by speaker after speaker in last week's debate against the Government's marketing proposals. The whole object of those proposals is to raise the average pit-head price of coal. So much is beyond reasonable dispute; and Ministers did not attempt to dispute it. Their defence was that the rise in prices would not be very great, and that some increase in prices was reasonable and justifiable and could be effected without serious detriment to British industry. "Quite plainly," admitted Mr. Graham, "if we set out to increase prices by four or five shillings a ton according to the fantastic figures of some newspapers . . . we should deserve to be driven from office at little more than an hour's notice." But, he went on, such suggestions were absurdly wide of the mark. The coal industry would not be so stupid as to attempt to raise prices to an excessive height, since this would stimulate the competition of oil and other substitutes for coal. And it would not be necessary for the industry to raise prices very much. The cost of the half-hour off the day might be as much as 1s. 6d. a ton. But this only affected some districts. Against it, there was the relief of de-rating, equivalent to from 7d. to 9d. per ton, there was the arrangement made at The Hague for the purchase of British coal by the Italian State railways, which would materially assist South Wales, and, generally, trade was beginning to improve. Thus the gulf to be bridged was not very wide; and it might be bridged, under the arrangements for levies and subsidies, which were merely a device for enabling the coal industry to follow the railways in charging what the traffic will bear, without raising the price at all against the depressed heavy industries. So reasoned Mr. Graham last week in elaboration of his plea that the increase of prices he is organizing is only a little one.

Now this plea would not suffice to remove misgivings, even if it were only the half-hour reduction of 1930 that we had to consider. At present prices the coal owners, taken as a whole, are losing money, and have been losing money for a long time past. The marketing scheme aims at bringing these losses to an end and restoring reasonable profits. In considering how much prices are likely to be raised, we have accordingly to add to the cost of the half-hour off the day a further substantial item under the above heading which Mr. Graham appeared to ignore. So far, however, so good—in principle at least. It is right that the price of coal should be such as to yield a normal return to capital, as well as a decent livelihood to labour. But what do normal profits mean in an industry like coal, where, as Mr. Hartshorn is always rightly reminding us, conditions vary so immensely

from mine to mine—and this, incidentally, is why it is so important to do nothing which will hamper the concentration of production in efficient modern pits—that profits of 7s. per ton in some cases may co-exist with losses of 7s. per ton in others? If prices were to be raised sufficiently to enable the uneconomic pits to yield a moderate profit, prices would be raised very substantially indeed.

We have really no assurance that something of this sort might not happen, or be at least attempted. The powers of the Bill are to be entrusted to representative committees of the owners, and experience of the Mining Association suggests that on such committees in most districts the mentality of the owners of comparatively small and comparatively uneconomic pits will predominate. Is it really safe to assume that such men will exercise the tremendous monopolistic powers which the Coal Mines Bill confers so moderately as to be content with prices at which many of them will continue to lose money? Mr. Graham tells us—he calls it the “great underlying safeguard”—that they will be content with such prices because otherwise coal would lose further ground to oil. What a flattering confidence in the capacity of the average coal owner, threatened as he is with compulsory amalgamation in the near future, to act as the far-sighted, disinterested custodian of the interests of his industry! And what a touching spectacle that it should be a Labour Government that reposes this confidence in him, after all the hard things that were said three years ago!

No; the risk that the present Bill would entail a really formidable rise of prices would be very considerable, even if we had only the reduction of hours in 1930 to think about. But what are we to say, when we take account of the facts that the working day is to be reduced by a further half-hour in 1931, that this reduction will affect all districts, South Yorkshire and Derbyshire, as well as Scotland and South Wales, that against this we can set no further compensating factors such as de-rating, and finally that it is by means of raising prices—for the Prime Minister tells us that amalgamations will take far too long—that the Government expects the industry to “readjust itself”? Clearly, along the lines of the present Bill the outlook for the consumer of coal, even if Mr. Graham’s reassuring considerations have any value for 1930, is extremely gloomy for 1931. Assuredly we shall do wisely to think very carefully indeed before we commit ourselves to so dangerous a policy.

On the other hand, the fact that the Eight Hours Act expires in 1931 is fatal to the Conservative contention that the best course would be to leave the industry alone to work out its own salvation. In a recent speech at Edinburgh Mr. Baldwin complained that

“the effect of the present legislation will be to throw back once more the coal industry into the political arena from which with such infinite difficulty we saved it in 1926.”

But how, if nothing is done meantime, does Mr. Baldwin imagine that the coal industry can be kept out of the political arena in 1931? It is common ground to all parties that if the Government had attempted to

restore the seven-hour day at one stroke next year, the results would have been disastrous. Can anyone, then, seriously argue that it would be safe to do this very thing just one year later? We are aware that some Conservative speakers in last week’s debate did attempt to argue this. Just one more year of quiet, and of recovery of markets (on the basis of eight-hour prices), might enable the industry, they suggested, to adapt itself to the seven-hour day without a tremor. But we cannot believe that their arguments were serious.

So far from saving the coal industry from the political arena in 1926, Mr. Baldwin, indeed, made it absolutely certain that it would be brought back to it not later than 1931; and it is the crowning instance of the ineptitude of his coal policy that he should have done so. How much better it would have been for the coal industry, in the long run, if he had refrained from touching hours at all! Or, if he must touch hours, how much better, if he had contented himself with adding half an hour, but had added this for good! A drastic but temporary increase of hours was, as we argued insistently at the time, of all policies the most fatal and the most absurd.

The consequences of this policy are with us now; and all parties have got to reckon with them. We have not before us a choice of doing something rash, or leaving well—or at least an accustomed ill—alone. If the Government’s Bill would take us, as we believe, along a highly perilous course, the consequences of following the Conservative advice to refrain from interference would be no less perilous. The whole situation is perilous; and it is this which lends, in our judgment, overwhelming cogency to the Liberal contention that we should grasp the nettle of compulsory amalgamation with resolution and without delay. This policy would meet the needs of the situation in more ways than are at first sight obvious. It might, for example, give us owners to deal with—and nothing could be more important—of a different mentality from that which has hitherto dominated the Mining Association. But we must not attempt to develop this side of the question now.

PARLIAMENTARY NOTES

THE Second Reading Debate on the Coal Bill produced the highest level of oratory, the most thrilling division, and the most interesting and indeed paradoxical situation that this Parliament has seen. Mr. William Graham gave it a worthy start by a remarkable personal achievement. I do not refer solely to his feat of memory, unequalled since the days of Mr. Bonar Law, in speaking for nearly two hours and dealing with statistics and complicated clauses, without a vestige of a note. That, like playing several blindfold chess games simultaneously, is, in a measure, a trick, and has even certain disadvantages, since, as the speech progresses, the impression of a magician tends to merge into that of a machine. But his clear mental grip of a difficult subject and the lucidity of his exposition were worthy of all praise.

* * *

But it was the speech of Sir Herbert Samuel, early though it came in the discussion, that proved the real turning point. Logically the case for the Bill never lifted

its head again when he had concluded his attack. It is enough to quote the tribute of Colonel Lane Fox, himself a most distinguished contributor to the debate, "Of all the really brilliant and devastating pieces of criticism I have heard during the many years I have sat in the House I do not think I have ever heard a speech of greater brilliance than that of the right hon. gentleman."

Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister was distinctly unfortunate in having to intervene between the two protagonists, for he was at the top of his form, and on any ordinary occasion would have made a notable impression. Mr. de Rothschild delighted his colleagues and the House with a witty and forcible maiden speech. Of those who supported the Bill the most interesting although the briefest was Mr. James Brown, the Ayrshire miner. He made clear the only real basis of support which this Bill will find anywhere outside the board-rooms of Colliery Companies. It may be a bad Bill, but it is one

"Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

The jewel being, of course, the reduction of hours. Further than that he did not desire to look. And that essentially was the position of the two Liberals who voted with the Government on the division. They were pledged to reduction of hours in a form which left them no option, and that fact is appreciated by their colleagues.

Mr. Ben Turner had the task of delivering the official reply to Sir Herbert's four crucial questions. He had been supplied with the answers carefully written, and he saw to it that they should be carefully read. But they were in themselves so inconclusive that it must be supposed that they were intended as feelers to test how far the Liberal Party would press its opposition. Mr. Turner had really nothing of his own to add, but, if he could not clarify the situation, he at least sent the House home in a good humour.

The Scholar-Gipsy said that his mates

"had arts to rule as they desired
The working of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts they will."

To Mr. Lloyd George above all living orators those arts have been imparted. He dominated the second day's debate, and played upon the House like a skilled musician. Even on the packed benches of the Government he aroused approval, amusement, or rage exactly as and when he desired. He even mesmerized them into making his points for him in chorus, and then mocked them for having learnt their lesson. When he had finished with the Coal Drama itself, he turned the shafts of his scorn on the actors and even on some of the supers. "That," said an old Parliamentary hand at the end of it, "is what I call pacifying a pony with a pitchfork."

The reactions of this speech were so inevitable that they were presumably designed. He inspired the opponents of the Bill to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, but he hardened the mood of the Government and consolidated their supporters by the brutal vigour of his challenge. He may well have intended that his own Party should not be placed *hors de combat* by concessions the reality of which could not have been readily estimated, and that the Socialist Party as a whole should take full responsibility for the Bill. But it is idle to psycho-analyze an earthquake;

it was a unique achievement, and will live always in the memory of those that heard it.

It is hard to realize now that Mr. Hartshorn was the Mr. Cook of his day. By that I mean no disrespect to either, but only that Mr. Hartshorn has gained in mellowness without losing in sincerity. The House hears him with the greatest respect on all subjects, but especially on Coal. He could not convincingly defend the present Bill, but he made a valuable historical background for it. Sir Tudor Walters, being a coal-owner, might have been delighted with the present proposals, but from a national point of view proceeded most effectively to turn them inside out.

Then came Winston, bounding into the arena with all the suppressed effervescence of many silent weeks. His bearing was eloquent of "Here we are again!" and "What a jolly night!" and, though it was too late to find any new points, he put the final touch to everything in his own inimitable style and convinced us that the House without him would be an egg without salt. The Prime Minister rose amid genuine enthusiasm amongst his followers, but did not altogether succeed in maintaining it. It is to his credit that he is not at his best on a bad case.

With the division came the paradox. It was a near thing, and there was the keenest excitement on both sides. And yet there can have been very few who voted against the Second Reading who did not secretly hope that it would be carried. For all members are human, and who could possibly desire an election in mid-winter? And of those who voted for it many had openly confessed their conviction that the Bill was rotten to the core. Yet so strong is the spirit of competition, and so natural the triumph in a win by a short head, that when the majority of eight was announced, Socialist members cheered and waved their Order papers as if they had just nationalized all the means of production, distribution, and exchange, instead of establishing a new private monopoly and inventing a new form of private property. But what would Keir Hardie have said about it all?

On Friday, Mr. Kingsley Griffith, on behalf of the Liberal Party, raised the Unemployment question on the salary of the Lord Privy Seal. He was followed by leaders of all three Opposition parties in speeches worthy of the occasion which there is no space to analyze here. Mr. Wheatley was logical and bitter; Mr. Lloyd George weighty and restrained; Mr. Baldwin philosophical and sympathetic. All desired to know, in face of the grave situation revealed by the mounting figures of unemployment, what the Lord Privy Seal and his colleagues were doing, how many men their schemes were employing, and what hope they could give for the future. Mr. Thomas appeared irritated and ill at ease, and hit back furiously at his questioners. But his answers could not be regarded by Liberals as satisfactory, and, as the occasion seemed premature for a vote of censure, they were compelled to stand aloof upon the vote to reduce his salary.

To-day (Tuesday), Winston is to raise something undefined (probably Cain) on the adjournment. One would like to see him come down with a red cap, and a long white beard, and a sackful of presents for a Good Government!

ERIMUS.

A LESSON IN TACT

"He thought that a great deal of harm was done by always advertising the unemployed figures."

—Mr. J. H. Thomas.

Why talk about the unemployed? No man with any tact Would set himself to advertise an inconvenient fact. It makes the public worry so. Why can't we all agree To drop the subject for a while, and leave the job to me?

There's lots of better topics, like our triumph at The Hague; The pledge we took from Russia (though I own its rather vague);

MacDonald's chats with Hoover—now we like to talk of those—

Or my own commercial exploits where the bonny maple grows.

There's our scheme for London transport, which you'll all approve, I know,

When you get the concrete details in another year or so— There's heaps of things we might discuss, and never get annoyed;

Then why this ceaseless harping on the numbers unemployed?

It only makes things awkward. Can't you see we're in a hole

When all our followers clamour for additions to the dole, While Snowden shakes his solemn head, and hopes we won't be rash?

(I sympathize with him, you know, *he's* got to find the cash.)

Then Liberal M.P.s get up and wave their schemes around. They're sound enough; but can't you see we mustn't own they're sound?

Lloyd George trots out his blessed roads—and that's a nasty jar,

For where's the sense in making roads to rile the N.U.R.?

Do leave those blessed graphs alone! Just when, by Heaven's aid,

You've got a man like J. H. T. to boost the export trade, Why call attention to the spots on our commercial sun?

It isn't good publicity—it simply isn't done!

MACFLECKNOE.

CREEPING PARALYSIS

WITH the close of the year, Mr. MacDonald's second administration will have held office for seven months. Its record, to date, has been a curious one. In the sphere of foreign relations it has won golden opinions, in quarters even that are normally hostile. An *entente cordiale* has been established with America; substantial progress made with naval disarmament; relations with Russia restored; the Rhineland evacuated; the Young plan safely launched. These are praiseworthy beginnings. In the domestic sphere, on the other hand, there is nothing comparable to chronicle. And this is both strange and disconcerting. For the real issue before the country, in May last, was the economic issue—the problem of that canker of unemployment which was slowly and steadily gnawing at the country's vitals—and the mandate with which, above any other, Mr. MacDonald returned to office, was a mandate to legislate, speedily, vigorously, and imaginatively, for the redress of our economic ills. He cannot plead, in justification of his failure to do so, that he was only partially conscious of the magnitude of the issue; he cannot plead that its ramifications were not properly understood; for the promises which he and his party dangled before the electorate were far-reaching and explicit. Labour pledged itself, in set terms, to face up to the realities of the situa-

tion, which for four years Mr. Baldwin's Government had ignored. And now, after seven months of temporizing and evasion, the promises of May are coming home to roost.

But that is not all. The central achievement of the autumn session (a session which ought to have opened two months earlier) is the Unemployment Insurance Bill. And the Unemployment Insurance Bill—in itself a technical measure, of which the public understands little—is a phenomenon of real importance. Its details may not greatly matter; its implications cut deep. For those who are concerned with our future economic welfare, its significance is threefold.

That significance lies, first, in the light that it sheds on the technique of modern democracy. The Government's first measure was an Act extending the number of beneficiaries eligible for pensions. Its second is a Bill which restores the "dole" (in theory, though not in fact, abolished in 1927), and which enlarges, beyond the scope of any previous Act, the numbers of those qualified to receive it. Does anyone suppose that—with the country crying out for constructive legislation—these two measures would, in its place, have been embarked on, were it not for two facts? The one, that the life of the Government is precarious; the other, that pensions and doles mean votes (or perhaps it is truer to say, are believed by politicians to do so). Pensionability and unemployment have become vested interests, which play their part, like other interests of longer standing, in the determination of political equilibria.

Secondly, the new Bill is significant as marking the final disintegration of the principle of unemployment insurance. That principle, like certain principles of the pharmacopœia, has proved susceptible of gross abuse. Insurance against unemployment was first introduced as a means of alleviating the distress caused by seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in industry. Its value, for such a purpose, is unquestioned; for the fundamental evil of industrial civilizations is economic insecurity. A larger dose of it was next administered, as the means whereby our industries were fortified against the shocks of war-time dislocation and post-war readjustment. This, if in principle questionable, was in practice defensible; there are times when every doctor must take certain risks in applying a stimulant to his patient. But what, in 1921, was applied as a stimulant, has too long been administered as an anodyne, and the effect of the new Bill is to increase the dosage and to widen the area of its application. The Unemployment Insurance Acts have ceased to be, primarily, the means by which wage-earners are tided over periods of misfortune. They have been developed, instead, into a social mechanism which masks, under the comfortable term "insurance," the weekly distribution of doles to masses of men and women for whom we can find no work; and which enables us to forget, for weeks and months together, the waste of life, the betrayal of hope, the blunting of resolve, which are a part—though a part only—of the price that we have to pay.

The time has come to recognize in fact—that the Unemployment Insurance Bill seeks instead ineffectually to disguise—that the possibilities of insurance as a palliative are exhausted. A drastic reconstruction of the whole system, in the light of industrial realities, is long overdue. Along what lines should this reconstruction be attempted? We suggest, as a basis of discussion, the following. Let the system of contributions and of benefits be adjusted—by the application, say, of the principles of the Blanesburgh Committee—to the facts of our industrial organization; so that what is now a top-heavy eleemosynary machine be-

comes, what originally it was intended to be, a real insurance system on a proper actuarial basis. Industry would thus be relieved of what is in fact a concealed tax, erratic in its incidence and an avoidable handicap to many trades. Let those who are now "insured" under the Acts, but who, given such reconstruction, would cease to be eligible for benefit, be brought within the scope of a new and entirely distinct organization, created, not to palliate unemployment, but to promote employment. Let this organization, financed out of the moneys that are now spent on implementing "transitional provisions," be the direct responsibility of the State. And let its possibilities be closely co-ordinated with that provision of work that is socially necessary, for which the Lord Privy Seal is supposed to be responsible.

For the present crisis demands a national effort—a mobilization, under the leadership of the Government itself, of available resources of money and men. It is this leadership which has so far been lacking; such money as we have is being squandered in keeping the available man-power unutilized. Counsels of defeatism and despair have, apparently, infected the Cabinet and have produced a paralysis of the will and the imagination, comparable to that which was the undoing of the late Government. The Unemployment Insurance Bill with its vast expenditure upon unconstructive ends—its cynical recognition of unemployment as a vested interest—its abject surrender to the difficulties of the *status quo*—form a more eloquent commentary upon Mr. Thomas's failure than do any of his or his colleagues' speeches.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE Parliamentary recess finds the Government in the position of a badly punished boxer who hears the gong with relief. They are granted a breathing space, and badly do they need it. The applause of John Bull came readily enough while Mr. Snowden was punishing the French, and Mr. MacDonald was making pretty speeches in the United States. The trouble began, as everyone knew it would, as soon as the champions came home and tackled a situation that could not be surmounted either by heroic "stands" or idealistic eloquence. Labour has gone from bad to worse ever since. Much of the goodwill with which they started has been frittered away. Their unemployment policy, on which they must stand or fall, is a grotesque failure, and is universally admitted to be that, and by no section of opinion more bitterly than by the real Socialists, who speak for the youth and enthusiasm of the Labour movement. Poor Mr. Thomas is reduced to echoing the mild orthodoxy of Mr. Baldwin. He can achieve nothing of much value by the makeshifts that were alone left to him when he contemptuously rejected the Liberal programme. And no one knows it better than he does. What is one to say about the rest of the session's work at home? A sop has been thrown to the Maxton party by an extension of the "dole" system which frightens everyone else, and in the struggle for access to the public purse Mr. Snowden is obviously getting the worst of it. Last, came the Coal Bill, which again is generally disliked; even the owners, the chief beneficiaries, do not really want it. The two good things in it, the reduction of hours and the Wages Board, are smothered and overwhelmed by the other features, and those, in the lump, are bad. The Government have brought off this sorry achievement at the price of forcing the Liberals into hostility and of alienating not merely the Left Wingers but almost the whole of the honest Trade Union sentiment on the Labour benches.

Labour, naturally, is blaming the Liberals. Their Press and platform resound with denunciations of Mr. Lloyd George. The common Labour view at the moment is that the Liberal opposition to the Coal Bill, and the manner of its expression, have ruined the chances of co-operation in the coming months. This is a doctrine of obvious convenience to the Government, from the party standpoint, but it will not bear examination. It is quite true that the relations between Ministers and the Liberals have become strained, but surely no impartial person would blame the Liberals for that. Mr. Graham and his colleagues could, if they had chosen, have acted in the spirit of their leader's "Council of State." They might have consulted the Liberal leaders and acted throughout with them in working out a solution. Instead of that, they chose to sacrifice political strategy to industrial tactics. In the effort to keep the miners and the owners quiet, everything else went by the board. Hence the mess in which they are now landed, with a Bill that scraped through its second reading against the mass of instructed opinion in the House and outside, a Bill that fortifies vested interests and leaves the consumer in the usual place—the cart. The immediate prospect before the Administration is not cheerful. It will be necessary, such is the weakness of their position, to concede to the Liberals in Committee the points they refused to concede before the division, or the Bill will hardly emerge at all. The Government have plunged with their eyes open into a position of difficulty and danger, in which all their hopes of a fruitful term of office may easily come to wreck. The absurdity of the whole thing is that there is no very important difference in principle between Labour and Liberal views on what should be done with the coal industry. If the Government had not been so scared of working with the Liberals they might easily have produced a more drastic Bill which, as is now clear, would have pleased their own followers much better than the timorous concoction that came of a rather abject effort to bribe the owners to shorten the miners' day.

* * *

By common consent these last few weeks have witnessed the renewed ascendancy of Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons. There was a time when the Labour benches thought it good sport to treat him with derision and contempt. That time has gone by. When he speaks now he compels a hearing, and it is increasingly a sympathetic hearing, for it is dawning on Labour members that the Liberal veteran is more democratic in many ways than their own Cabinet. This was emphatically the case in the debates on the Coal Bill, when Mr. Lloyd George, in his consummate performance on the Second Reading, said what many Labour men would have said if their courage had been greater than their party loyalty. Reading or listening to that speech was like following a solo by some virtuoso playing his instrument with perfect ease and precision. The wisdom, in those circumstances, of the personal references may be open to question, but there was no denying their blistering force. The effect certainly was to enrage Mr. MacDonald, and that is, I think, a pity. What made this speech so effective was not the fierce personalities, but simply the fact that Mr. Lloyd George, as people say, had got the goods. He had a splendid case, gratuitously presented to him by the Government, and human nature being what it is, he made the most of it. The fact is, of course, that with the doubtful exception of Mr. Churchill, there is no one now in the House to touch him for all-round efficiency at the job of debating, though it is true that the dead level of commonplace in this House makes his supremacy especially salient.

I have been turning over in my mind a criticism addressed to myself, to the effect that this insistence on the "beastliness" of war has been overdone—that to give the impression that the war was nothing but horror and degradation is to do a grave injustice to the soldiers who died and suffered. No one is more anxious than I am that the war-innocent generation now growing up should not be allowed to romanticize the war, or to forget, as a matter of deterrence, its essential vileness. All the same I must in candour admit that there is some force in the argument I have quoted. I think the horror business is being over-emphasized in some of the current German war literature: the pendulum is swinging too far. Some of this art has the taint of propaganda, and though I agree with the propaganda, I think a balanced and truthful picture is worth more than one distorted by disgust, or the desire to warn. And in sober fact one must remember that there was more in it than agony and beastliness: there was comradeship, there was courage, there was indeed the splendour of sacrifice. To take a rather prosaic view for a moment, one may put it thus: The chief difference in practice between man and man is that between the tough and the sensitive. It is a matter of everyone's personal knowledge that while the war did the most terrible damage to many sensitive men who went through the fire of the trenches (trench life was a minority experience, of course), multitudes of the tough escaped without any particular mental injury. I suppose it is by way of popular reaction against the undiluted tragedy of the current literature that some of the newspapers are publishing humorous soldiers' stories, and these are just as true and just as worth remembering as the selection from the facts to be found in "All Quiet" or "Good-bye to All That." The time has not yet come (nor the genius born) when a complete picture will be possible.

This has been a good year for the acquisition of bits of beautiful landscape by the public, and it has closed with two fine Christmas presents for the National Trust—Runnymede, and a strip of woodland on the slope of Leith Hill. Runnymede, where the magnates successfully bullied King John, was in danger from the riverside bungalow, and is still threatened by vulgarization from the week-end motorist, who uses the place in summer as a parking-ground and a depository for litter. I note that the owner of the little adjoining island, which is, according to some antiquarians, the true place of the sealing of Magna Carta, is urging the National Trust to keep the motors away, now that the meadows belong to us all. If not he may sell the island "without restrictions"—an ominous phrase. It is interesting to note in this connection that a condition of the gift of the Duke's Warren in Surrey is that motors shall be kept off the land. This is only common fairness. The motorists have made life unpleasant for pedestrians on the roads: surely the latter may be allowed to enjoy these national parks in peace. One would like to see this laid down as a fixed rule for all these public spaces. Bird sanctuaries are admirable, but why not a few sanctuaries for the hunted and diminishing pedestrian?

An entertaining *TIMES* article on the "revolution" at Monaco sent my mind voyaging pleasantly from the cold and wet of an English December to that sun-steeped little rock. Monaco must be the most unreal of all towns. One walks about its preposterously clean and tidy streets with the feeling that one has blundered on to the stage of an opera with a pasteboard castle in the background, and the music just about to begin. The Prince's soldiers, immaculately clean and gay, are like chorus soldiers; the whole place has a ridiculous but charming artificiality. The very sunshine seems diminished to the glow of footlights. It is curious to read of the recent irruption of politics—and three-party politics at that—into this theatrical drama. The inimitable content and prosperity of the dwellers on the Rock is sustained by the money that pours, from all

the prodigality of Europe, into the Casino across the bay, and it seems that of late the supremacy of Monte Carlo has been threatened by upstart enterprises at Nice and elsewhere. Hence the demand for reform, excitement, and an operative demand for a popular constitution. The hulla-balloo has now been set at rest, by the granting of concessions, the return of a paternal Prince, and a final chorus of reconciliation. The politics of Monaco are as delightful a change from the normal as going to the pantomime at Christmas.

One would not naturally turn to the exile of Doorn as an authority on democracy. An enterprising interviewer, however, asked the ex-Kaiser whom he regarded as the best democratic brain in Europe. He replied without hesitation, "Bernard Shaw, on account of his 'Apple Cart.'" The ex-Kaiser's enthusiasm for the "Apple Cart" is understandable. But why "democratic"?

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BUREAUCRACY

SIR,—If I may say so with the deepest respect, your answer to my letter does not in the least degree meet its point.

(1) I should never dream of denying—indeed, in a forthcoming book on our system of government I have very strongly argued—that the increasing functions of government have made an enormous increase in the numbers, functions and *expertise*, of the Civil Service both inevitable and necessary. But bureaucracy has characteristic dangers, which can only be guarded against by eternal vigilance, criticism, and control. The methods of criticism and control provided by our system are, in my judgment, wholly inadequate and inefficient. The Cabinet cannot and does not exercise real control, because it has too much to do. But the dictatorship which it wields whenever it has a majority is, in fact, used as a means of preventing the exercise of any control by the House of Commons. In any case, the procedure of that House is such that it cannot effectively criticize or control the work of the departments. The result is that, within wide limits, the power wielded by bureaucracy is, in fact, irresponsible. I cannot here develop this argument; but I have done so, pretty fully, elsewhere.

(2) Your remarkable sentences, on which I commented, recognize and imply that the bureaucracy is mainly responsible for the form of legislation, even in party Bills such as the one under discussion; and this is still more the case in what are called Departmental Bills, and in the innumerable Orders and Regulations having the force of law which the Departments have been empowered to issue. But your contention that the House of Commons must not alter the provisions laid down by the bureaucracy, or will do so at its peril, is indeed strange doctrine.

(3) You said that if the new Clause 4 worked badly this would prove that the Commons ought not to "revolt" against the bureaucracy. I replied that it would prove no such thing, but that it *might* demonstrate one or more of three quite different conclusions, two of which would, in my judgment, be sound—(a) that the principles of our unemployment legislation needed revision, and (b) that the procedure of the House of Commons was faulty. The third possible conclusion (which I did not endorse) was that the bureaucracy had not done its best to work the new clause. On this you suggest that I have charged the bureaucracy with deliberately sabotaging an Act of Parliament! There is a difference between straining every nerve to work a system in which you disbelieve, and "deliberately sabotaging" it. But pray observe that all I said was that this interpretation *might* be placed upon a breakdown of the clause, though I myself would prefer the other two explanations.

There is a real difference between us. I believe that there has been a very striking increase not only in the range of functions performed by the Civil Service (which is inevitable and beneficial), but also in the degree of independence with which these functions are exercised, owing to

the reduced power of the House of Commons under the dictatorship of the Cabinet and the inefficiency of the House of Commons procedure. You do not seem to share my misgivings on this head. But the matter is a very serious one, which deserves fuller examination than is possible in a letter.—Yours, &c.,

RAMSAY MUIR.

THOSE "PATIENT OXEN"

SIR,—In your political notes of this week I am asked to notice that that joke about the patient oxen, with which I used to keep the Oxford Union in a roar, is not new. It is not; but I must plead "not guilty" to having made it. I went down from Oxford before the Liberal Party submitted to the yoke in 1924. Nor did I make the joke in the House of Commons the other day. Mr. Ernest Brown had caused much hilarity by comparing absent Conservative members to "wild asses" quenching their thirst in the South of France. In view of the differences between Mr. Brown and Mr. Foot, and the usual practice of the Liberals in voting with the Socialists, I thought I was entitled to predict that they would do so again, and to quote the words "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib." This was not a joke, but very seriously meant.—Yours, &c.,

EDWARD MARJORIBANKS.

Travellers' Club,
Pall Mall, S.W.1.
December 21st, 1929.

VIRGINIA WOOLF UPON WOMEN

SIR,—After reading to-day your reviewer's thoughts on Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own," I took my pulse, and found my temperature to have risen three degrees Frivoly. Feverish gleams of amusement darted through my blood, and pounded for expression. If, in my turn, I tap them upon my typewriter, and address them to you, perhaps I may return to normal.

It seems to me that Miss Irvine has been misled by Virginia Woolf's light saunterings into supposing that Mrs. Woolf was not arriving at anything in particular; and that, by proving here and there a step of hers to be arguable, one could easily show the end reached to be nothing. There is a very fine little poem of Wilfrid Gibson's in this same issue of *THE NATION*, called "The Broken Bridge," in which he describes how one step out of tune in the marching throng of thoughts hurls the whole legion into the abyss. Mrs. Woolf does not cross her abysses on a bridge woven of logic. She darts across, on something more like a ray of light. A "rainbow of hope" would be a very pretty moral bridge, but Mrs. Woolf's lights are of the mind, and go straight to the other side. Around the ray dance jolly motes, that wink in and out from darkness into light and back again. I want to speak first of the motes, the meanderings; later, of the central stream of light.

The dear hoary old biological-inferiority argument has been treated with so much solemnity, for so long, that I wonder any woman can still keep the corners of her mouth down when it is mentioned. Would it not be more just, for once, to pity the men, for their physical handicaps? Woman sleeps an hour longer (poor, helpless thing!), but man cannot really spend all of that hour in writing "Paradise Lost." Part of it has to go into shaving from his chin that beard with which unkind Nature is forever freshly entangling his career. "Now Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a beard!" says Olivia's clown to the disguised Viola. But Viola is safe. Never will Nature impose this handicap upon her. Never will she have to rush for the styptic pencil, or "confound these dull razors!" And then, with the greatest delicacy, and perhaps with one eye upon Sir William Joynson-Hicks, the reviewer suggests disabilities, which, even if you "deprive her of all possibility of marrying," are still considered to form woman's "irrevocable" handicap in the business of artistic creation. I, too, wish to be delicate. Has it never struck your reviewer that when one is considering the business of artistic creation, as opposed, for instance, to the business of catching the 8.49 every morning, in order to reach one's real estate office, there is an invaluable stimulus in the periodicity of Nature, as displayed, say—in the changing seasons? Poets and

painters and musicians feel one way in Spring, another way in the Fall, and bless the change, without grumbling too much about sore throats, sunburn, chilblains, and what-not. Musicians tell us that the natural tempo of our spirits varies from afternoon to evening; and one need not be a musician to recognize and welcome the fresh morning, the peaceful after-dinner, mood. I am not pretending often to have found artistic perception by means of a cold in the head, but through other risings and fallings of physical health, the sun, the year, the barometer—yes. I feel I should loathe California in the dry season!

And then there is the impetus lent by the thought of losses to be retrieved:—

"Winged sandals for my feet
I wove of my delay."

But I must not allow myself to be serious, lest I give the impression of one chanting "The Psalm of Life," in what your English novelists so deliciously call "an unmistakably Trans-Atlantic accent." (The phrase is one of my brightest joys, and I am planning to write a novel, myself, some time, for the pleasure of introducing an *Englishman* with this classic flourish.)

It is a bit hard to follow Miss Irvine, because she proves things, as we Americans say, "all over the block at once." She proves simultaneously that woman's silence under discouragement shows her to be without the vital spark, and that she has always, as a matter of fact, been particularly encouraged. She proves (I am consciously being a little unfair) that nobody worth saving would put up with prunes and custard, and that it is only on prunes and custard that a "Wuthering Heights" can be written. A trifle bewildered, we say to Miss Irvine, in Christian's words, "What shall I do to be saved?" And she says, cheerfully, "Nothing—you are damned." But I feel that, all the time, Miss Irvine has been looking at the dancing peripheral motes, and saying, "These arrive nowhere!" And she has not noticed anything for herself, on the other side of the abyss. Mrs. Woolf is nevertheless pointing it out. "Woman has been handicapped," she remarks. "Changed conditions are now removing a handicap or two. That is very pleasant. Every little helps. Suppose we allow ourselves to feel fresh courage for the effort towards art, which, in any case, our nature drives us to pursue."

I agree with Mrs. Woolf—a little courage never comes amiss.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCES M. ORR.

CHRISTIANITY AND PURITANISM

SIR,—May I thank Mr. McCullum for parts of his article on "Anti-Puritanism in England and Scotland," and especially for this sentence:—

"It is useless to lay upon one sect or one figure, Calvin, Augustine, or Paul, what is really part of the common stock of Christian practice and morality" (and certainly of the morality of the Stoics, as probably of all genuine religious beliefs).

Anti-Puritanism is becoming a mere cant. And the term Puritanism is used so loosely as to be interchangeable with Calvinism in popular writing.

Puritanism is not asceticism. It holds no brief (however often it may have degenerated in practice) for forgoing *goods* merely because they are good (which, by the by, was both the theory and the practice of the best Catholics of the Middle Ages).

The whole meaning of the Christian standard of ethics, Catholic and Protestant alike, is the desire to exchange a good or ephemeral thing for a better or more enduring thing—Time for Eternity; material life for spiritual life; merely luxurious food and clothing for more inspiring material good; exclusive self-benefit for the benefit of others.

Probably in the case of each of us, there is at least one (essential) good gift, which obstructs our personal spiritual life. Such things, if we are Christians, surely we (not other men) are bound to abandon. This is why Christian habit cannot be stereotyped, and why, as it appears to me, no genuinely "religious" person *can* always act as other people do. The mischief of a degenerate Puritanism was that it tended to pronounce upon certain *things*, and chiefly happiness-bringers, as wrong for all.

Possibly the individualism implied in what is said above is incompatible (in theory only—many "Romans" certainly adopt the practice) with Roman-Catholicism and Anglo-Catholicism. Is it also incompatible with "modern" Christianity?

If so, it separates itself from Christ's most emphatic ethical teaching of a Puritanism that is not asceticism. A Puritanism thrice repeated in the earliest Gospel (St. Mark ix., 44-48). See also St. Matthew v., 29-30.—Yours, &c.,

A WOULD-BE PURITAN.

December 18th, 1929.

THE DOLMETSCH FOUNDATION

SIR,—The music which culminated in the Elizabethan period in England has been rediscovered more slowly than the literature of the period, which suffered for a time the same eclipse. The value of the vocal music is now as well established as the value of the Elizabethan drama; the instrumental music, of which there is much greater store, has had to wait longer for recognition, because proper appreciation was impossible until it could be played on the instruments for which it was written in accordance with the technique proper to those instruments and to the time.

It is to this end that Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch has devoted himself for nearly half a century, and the festivals which he has held at Haslemere for the last four years have demonstrated to a wide public the supreme beauty of this music. In England we owe him a special debt, for he has shown that in those days the English led the world in instrumental as in vocal music.

The work of Mr. Dolmetsch has been accomplished only by the unique combination in him of the scholar, the musician, and the craftsman, and it is our earnest desire to ensure that his learning in all its forms shall be preserved and handed on to posterity.

To this end we have founded the Dolmetsch Foundation, with the practical objects of providing scholarships for the study under Mr. Dolmetsch of the construction and technique of the lute, viol, recorder, clavichord, and harpsichord, and the other instruments; of assisting in the expansion of the workshops; of developing the investigation and execution of the music of the period in every way; and, in addition, of providing a link between all who are interested in it.

In the short time in which it has been in existence, the Foundation has received the support of very many persons distinguished in music and letters all over the world. It has granted three scholarships and raised a loan for the much-needed extension of the workshops at Haslemere. To carry out its objects in full a large membership is essential, and we appeal for the support of all who have the interests of music at heart. Full details of the Foundation's objects and work may be obtained from the Secretary, at 37, Walbrook, E.C.4.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT BRIDGES.

PERCY BUCK.

WALFORD DAVIES.

HENRY HADOW.

SELWYN IMAGE.

D. LLOYD GEORGE.

RICHARD TERRY.

W. G. WHITAKER.

London, E.C.4,

December 5th, 1929.

ON THE EVE OF STEPHEN

SIR,—May I point out in a friendly manner to your correspondent that "good King Wenceslas" was not King Wenceslas IV., son of the Emperor Charles IV., and brother of the astute and unscrupulous Emperor Sigismund. The hero of our carol was Prince (not King) St. Vaclav (German Wenzel, Latinized Wenceslas), circa 907-929. He was a zealous Christian, who occupied himself with works of mercy and charity, faced by strong rivals like Arnulph of Bavaria and Henry the Fowler of Saxony. From Henry he received the relic arm of St. Vitus, which induced him to found the church succeeded by St. Vitus's cathedral, Prague. Vaclav wisely made terms with the Germans, but his nobles favoured an aggressive policy, and at their instigation he was murdered by his brother and successor Boleslav. The millenary celebrations of his martyrdom have taken place throughout Czechoslovakia during this year, culminating with September 28th, the date of his murder at Stara Bole-

slav, Northern Bohemia. I have seen the church at this town, where are the helmet and other relics of the Saint.

Our carol is due to the Rev. J. Mason Neale, D.D., to whom we are indebted for "Jerusalem the Golden" (St. Bernard de Morlaix), "Those Eternal Bowers" (St. John Damascene), and many other hymns. It is remarkable that English illustrators of the carol represent Vaclav as a hoary, regal sage, which he could never have been. The page Podivin, it is sad to relate, was afterwards hanged by Boleslav.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCIS P. MARCHANT.

Streatham.

KITTY—A PONY

A DAY or two ago I had a letter from McLaren. "I have taken Kitty home to my farm," he wrote, "and she is looking very well, but I am told she took the huff after you left; in fact, she refused her sugar for a day or two. I think Kitty was missing her usual walk and the company she had." When I read the letter to Her whom I honour and obey, she said, "Poor darling angel!" but I know she was secretly pleased that Kitty had "taken the huff." Kitty is our pony.

We had sworn, after the last bitter parting, that we would have no more animals to tear our heart-strings; but now for the first time in our lives we have a pony of our own. We cannot possibly afford to keep one in London—or anywhere else for that matter—and, as it happens, McLaren lives in Perthshire and we are in London. Could anything be more mad? And yet I am unrepentant and, when a candid friend told me, with the altruistic detachment characteristic of the type, exactly how great a fool he took me to be, and advised me to sell the pony at once, for what she would fetch where she was, I retorted that he had less soul than a carrot—"and, which is less," I added, "a wire-wormy carrot."

When we decided to spend our holiday in a modest little hotel in Perthshire we had no thought of a pony; but we had not reckoned with the offspring. Two years ago, during a brief holiday on Exmoor, he had ridden, or, to be accurate, had been carried by a quiet native pony. Last summer he had a few riding lessons on half-starved hirelings, and he took it for granted that a pony would be found for him for these holidays. The offspring generally gets what he wants, and, although the extravagance of the Scottish holiday to which we had committed ourselves came nightly between us and our rest, we set inquiries on foot as to the possibility of hiring a pony, leaving the question whether we should sell the piano or the grandfather clock to be decided after our return.

The outcome of an expensive budget of letters and telegrams was the hiring of Kitty. It was a leap in the dark. We were assured that she was perfectly quiet and had been ridden by a boy; but the assurance came from the owner, through McLaren, to the people of the hotel, and at that time we knew none of them. I had many misgivings; but, as she appeared to be the only pony available, we decided to make sure of her and trust to luck. And so we took train for Ballinluig in hope rather than in faith.

Looking back on our first meeting with Kitty, I can see that what eventually happened was inevitable from the beginning. McLaren was waiting for us on our arrival at the hotel. It was he who had hired the pony for us: he was feeling his responsibility and evidently shared my misgivings. He told me at once that he knew nothing of the pony except that he had seen her one day in Perth market with a boy on her back and liked the look of her. She was in a field belonging to the hotel, and he suggested that we should go at once and inspect her. Accompanied by

his son, a lad of about fifteen, and the offspring, we set off for the field, and that was the beginning from which, as I have said, the rest inevitably followed.

When a pony you have never met before walks confidently up to you, allows herself to be saddled and bridled and ridden about a field by four people of different weights and ages as if she liked it; when she walks like a lady, trots like a ballerina, and canters like an eager child, she has you more or less at her mercy. There was only one doubt in our minds. Was she a bit too free in her going for the offspring who, though he had a good natural seat, had only the sketchiest idea of how to handle a pony? We put her on a lead—him on her back. She walked as fast as I could walk with any comfort and trotted fast enough to keep me at full stretch, though I am fairly fleet of foot and sound in wind and limb; but the offspring was well content; his riding improved from day to day, and Kitty soon realized that she was carrying an inexperienced child and adapted herself to his lack of experience.

Nobody knew her name; but there was never any doubt of it. She was Kitty. She had all the insinuating ways of a kitten, particularly the rubbing habit. The only difference is that a kitten rubs itself against your legs, and Kitty, in her exuberant affection, nearly pushes you off them; and, of course, when her lady mistress by tenancy produced sugar, Kitty became a confirmed pocket rummager.

Within a week she had become one of the family. We found byways and grassy glades through woods and over moors on which to ramble and picnic: the leading rein was discarded except on the tarmac roads where the motor traffic ran—not that Kitty objects to a car or two, but that road-hogs abound—and, away from the main roads, Kitty and the offspring, on the best of terms with one another, were left to their own devices while we tramped along on foot.

At first, when we halted in our rambles for a smoke or a picnic luncheon, Kitty was either held by the leading rein or tethered to a tree; but it soon became apparent that she had no wish to stray far from us, and we began to leave her at liberty, merely taking the precaution of tying the reins to the saddle so that they should not slip over her head as she grazed. Sometimes she would lose sight of us and come trotting back to make sure that we were still about. If she found us at luncheon, she would cheerfully step into the circle and rummage for titbits. She would eat almost anything, and showed a preference for tongue sandwiches, which did not surprise us, because we know a cart-horse who eats kippers.

Only once, and then not deliberately, did she run away. She had strayed further than usual, and suddenly I saw her throw up her head and listen. Then she broke into a trot, going away from us. I called her; but she did not get the direction of the sound, and the more I called the faster she trotted in the wrong direction. So I stopped calling and just ran. She halted to listen again, and I passed her so that I was in her line of sight and, when I called her again, she ran to me and made as much fuss as if we had been parted for years.

It was thus that Kitty captured our hearts. She made it so very clear that she liked to be with us. And it was not mere cupboard love: it was downright good fellowship. She would nibble my hand as I walked beside her or—ever so gently—my ear as I stooped to run my hand over her legs or pick up her feet. When we went to the field she would whinney, or as Andrew, the factotum of the hotel, expressed it, “nicker” at sight of us and come to us of her own accord. As “She” said, it was more like having a dog with one than a pony.

As we approached the end of our brief holiday, the thought of saying “Good-bye” to Kitty, probably for ever, threw a cloud over our happiness in her society; but we consoled ourselves with the reflection that she had a good home to go back to: for it was abundantly clear that she had always been well treated: she could not otherwise have been so trustful. Then suddenly we learned that she was to be sold when we gave her up. What that might mean we knew well. There is little demand for ponies in Scotland except among the “tinkers.” We had seen many of the “tinkers’” ponies, and the sight of any one of them was enough to break one’s heart. The thought of Kitty between the shafts of a “tinker’s” cart filled us with sickening apprehension. Thus it was that when one day I heard that a laird of the locality, wishing to purchase a pony for his sister to hack about the estate, had come to see Kitty, I hastened, unbidden, to meet him and give her a good character—for I felt that here was the opportunity to place her in a good home.

I found the Laird in the field looking dubiously at Kitty’s near foreleg. She has a thick tendon, a blemish which, though it does not seem to cause her any inconvenience, is bound to raise doubts in the mind of an unprejudiced purchaser. I told him of all her virtues and her lovable disposition, but he would talk of nothing but her leg. I assured him eagerly that it was of no consequence. I was too eager. He obviously thought that I was financially interested in her sale, and he bade me good-bye somewhat coldly. I returned in gloomy depression.

That night McLaren called at the hotel and I met him. He asked me whether the Laird had come to see Kitty, and I told him the story.

“He was aye like that,” he said, “he has no sense. From what you tell me the pony is the very animal for his job, and, as to her leg, that’s nothing to worry about.”

I asked him whether he knew the price of the pony, and he told me the sum that had been named.

“I’ll go to that price,” I said, “if I can’t get her for less. I can’t afford it, and I have nowhere to keep her; but I won’t let her be auctioned.”

With perfect courtesy he besought me not to be a fool.

“Man,” he said, “have you thought what it will cost you to get yon pony to England?”

“I have a rough idea,” I said, “but first I want to know her cash price in Scotland.”

“Well,” he said, “I’ll telephone to-morrow morning, and I’ll do my best.”

We met again the next day, and McLaren delivered the owner’s ultimatum.

“She’s cheap at the price,” I said, “whether I can afford it or not.”

“She’s cheap at the price for anybody that wants her here,” he replied, “but she’ll be a dear pony by the time you have her in the south. If you’ll be advised by me, you’ll let her be.”

“Have you ever thought,” I answered, “what is likely to become of Kitty?”

He did not reply at once, then—

“I have a wee Shetland at home,” he said, “and he is of no use to me. But I heard the tinkers were after him so I told the auctioneer to outbid the tinkers, and he is free of the farm and welcome too.”

“You are as big a fool as I am,” I replied, “so we are quits. I’ll write a cheque.”

“There is no hurry,” he said, “take a day to think over it.”

“All right,” I said, “I’ll write the cheque to-morrow.”

He chuckled, then said:

"Well, since you're so set on the pony—and let me tell you you are spoiling her something awful—you can leave her to me, and she'll be free of my farm till you send for her." And, as we shook hands, I knew that I had met a man and a brother.

A few minutes later I announced to Her and to the offspring that I had bought Kitty; whereat the offspring cheered loudly and She inconsequently wept.

MORYS GASCOYEN.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Circus, Olympia.

THE 10th Annual Circus at Olympia is as enjoyable as ever, though enjoyable, perhaps, with a difference. There was less sensation than usual. No one was shot from a gun or swam about in a tank with crocodiles. Short of this, there was something for every taste. Most of all I liked Long Jack Sam's Chinese Revue, with amazing artists performing feats of exquisite jugglery. Poodle and George Hamford, English-born but to-day America's greatest riders, gave some delightful exhibitions on horseback. The clowns seemed to me every bit as good as the Fratellini in their prime. The musical Andreus, and the four Bronetts were equally admirable. It is impossible to mention all the excellent sketches which go to make up a three hours' entertainment, but "Charlie" Rivels, the acrobat who imitates Mr. Chaplin, was once more received with rapture by his old friends, and Miss Adele Nelson's baby elephants became prime favourites on their first appearance. I did not have as much time as I should have liked for the side-shows. But they seemed more variegated than ever. No parent who is able to do so will abstain from taking his children to Olympia. Incidentally he will enjoy himself quite a lot.

"Madame Plays Nap," New Theatre.

It is difficult to imagine what can have been the mentality of those who wrote and produced "Madame Plays Nap," Miss Sybil Thorndike's new production at the New Theatre, which is a grotesque "comedy of manners" straggling from an indeterminate date during the French Revolution to about 1810. The tale tells how a French dancing-master loved his wife so much, how Princess Pauline Berghase was set upon the ruin of the two, and how Napoleon was so crassly imbecile that she almost succeeded. Considering how bullied he was in his own Court, he must have been glad to set off on the Russian campaign. I have not seen anything quite so stupid and pointless as this "romantic comedy" for quite a long time. Miss Sybil Thorndike played the leading part with a large sauciness which some people may enjoy. I did not.

"The Sport of Kings," Strand Theatre.

There seems to be no particular reason why this "Ian Hay" farce, now revived for the first time since its original production some five years ago, should not take its place among the hardy annuals of Christmas time. Its humour, founded largely on the *lapsus lingue*, is of that boisterous, totally unreal variety to be found in "Charley's" perennial "Aunt," and its plot is no less wildly implausible than that of "The Private Secretary." Its technique, too, belongs to much the same era as that of those two venerable *opera*. Mr. Herbert Harben is a worthy successor to the late Holman Clarke as the pompous J.P. who suddenly finds himself backing winners. As I was not vouchsafed a programme I can name no other names than that of Miss Henrietta Watson, but the young actor who plays Mr. Basil Foster's old part deserves an honourable mention.

* * *

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—
Monday, December 30th.—

"Paddy, the Next Best Thing," at the Garrick.

"The White Land," at the Players.

"Iolanthe," at the Savoy.

"Pygmalion," at the Royal Court Theatre.

London Opera Festival begins, Scala Theatre.

Wednesday, January 1st, 1930.—

Exhibition of Italian Arts opens, Royal Academy of Arts, 9.30 a.m.

"Ten Nights in a Bar Room," at the Gate Theatre Studio.

Friday, January 3rd.—

Mr. Harold Swann, on "Falconry," at the City Literary Institute, Goldsmith Street, W.C.2, 6.30.

OMICRON.

HANDS

How will ever
the mind denote
which is knowledge,
which is thought?

A million colours
may disguise
the light of truth,
and cheat the eyes.

A million sounds
may dim and blur
the sound of truth,
and cheat the ear.

A million perfumes
cover well
truth's sharp,
burning smell;

And hiding the bitter
taste of truth
a million flavours
cheat the mouth.

Mouth and nose,
ear and eye
are cheated
of reality.

But what deception
may encroach
upon the things
the hands touch?

Who has ever
thought to make
false shapes
for the hands' sake?

By hands alone
the difficult,
innocent shape
of truth is felt.

All that the mind
has dreamed or guessed
is here made real,
and here possessed

by the bone's edge,
the skin's curve,
the wise blood,
the searching nerve.

Reality
may not escape
the austere evidence
of shape.

However far
the truth extends
its source
is at the fingers' ends.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

ON THE BENCH AND IN THE DOCK

A GOOD many people have much more sympathy for the criminal than for the judge. The author of "The 'Young Person's' Complete Guide to Crime," Mr. C. G. L. du Cann (Richards & Toulmin, 3s. 6d.), is apparently one of them. This, as its title indicates, is a facetious book. The solemn joke is one of the most difficult of literary forms and is hardly ever successful. A Swift may, for a dozen or more pages, in "A Modest Proposal for preventing the Children of the Poor from being a Burden to their Parents or Country, and for making them beneficial to the Publick," balance himself on a razor edge, and so produce a masterpiece, but he does it by knowing where to stop and by the most delicate use of what grammarians call *meiosis*. Mr. Du Cann, like an unskilled engineer, underestimates the strain which a funny author imposes upon the mind of the reader. He tries to be funny all the time and spoils the joke by his jokes. His *jeu d'esprit* would have been more successful, if before writing it he had carefully studied Swift or even Mr. Duff's "A Handbook on Hanging," which was published a little time back in the same series as his own volume.

* * *

When one reads the history of justice enshrined in famous trials, it is easy to see why so many people prefer the psychology of the dock to that of the bench. Open any book of celebrated trials and "see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief," and you will say with the mad Lear, "handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief?" Think of the King's Attorney, Sir Edward Coke, later to become the greatest of Lord Chief Justices, allowed by the Court to rail upon Sir Walter Raleigh. Think of Lord Chief Justice Hyde, and Lord Chief Justice Scroggs, and Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, the Stuarts' judicial jackals. Think of the Lord Chancellor, Francis Bacon. Even the scoundrelism of such a scoundrel as Titus Oates does not leave quite such a bad taste in the mouth as the scoundrelism of these great men. It has, however, become the fashion just lately for biographers to use whitewash, and it is recommended even to the historian. If you happen to say that crucifixion was a bad habit, or the torture of witnesses an unfortunate custom, or the doctrines of Calvin monomaniac, someone is certain to pop up his head and explain that this has always been the best possible world, and, therefore, that whatever has been was best. Naturally too, in these circumstances it is necessary to whitewash the great judges from Coke to Jeffreys. If you want to learn what a fine fellow Coke was, you may read a book just published, "Chief Justice Coke, his Family and Descendants at Holkham," by Charles Warburton James (Country Life, 30s.). This is a pleasant enough book, the kind of book to take away with you at Christmas and doze over before a wood fire in some drafty old country house. It is full of original documents from the papers of the Coke family, beginning with the great Sir Edward, and ending with old Lady Leicester dying in 1775 at Holkham. There is nothing very exciting here, but the letters are often interesting. The portion which deals with Sir Edward's descendants is much better than that which deals with the great judge himself. Mr. James does his best for Coke, but he was a very unsympathetic character. He may have been a great lawyer, and in later years a fearless politician who stood up to

the Stuarts in defence of "liberty," but one almost agrees with Mr. Trevelyan that he is "one of the most disagreeable figures in history."

* * *

The process of whitewashing has recently been extended to Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys, who requires a good deal more whitewash than Coke to make him respectable, and gets it. In the last paragraph of "The Bloody Assizes," edited by J. G. Muddiman, in the "Notable Trials Series" (Hodge, 10s. 6d.), we read:—

"And so passed George Jeffreys, Knight and Baronet, first Baron Jeffreys of Wem and Lord High Chancellor of England. That he was a great lawyer, a great judge, and a great man—the trusted confidant of one king and the neglected adviser of another—is beyond dispute."

When a writer says that anything is beyond dispute, we almost always know that he means that it is highly disputable and much disputed, and that presumably is what Mr. Muddiman means in this case. There is no reason for believing that Jeffreys was a great lawyer; there is some reason for believing him to have been a bad judge; and as for his having been a great man, that depends very much upon what you mean by "great man." If all the trusted confidants of kings (not to speak of such queens as the great Catherine) were great men, the list will be a long one, and there is no possible objection to Mr. Muddiman's adding Jeffreys' name to it. Mr. Muddiman's book is really interesting, and it is a great pity that he has spoilt it by being so intent on the whitewash. After examining the bibliography of the book known as "The Bloody Assizes," he argues that it was the work of John Dunton, John Tutchin, and Titus Oates. The argument is not very well set out, and with regard to Oates is not at all convincing. He also maintains that Macaulay and the Whig historians based their accounts of Jeffreys and the Bloody Assizes entirely on this work, and were unaware of its authorship. He says that the whole book is fictitious, except with regard to the number of persons executed. But even if we accept all Mr. Muddiman's statements and arguments with regard to this book, there is other evidence against Jeffreys which he has to dispose of, and his methods of doing so are, to say the least, peculiar. He has somehow or other to prove that the report of the trial of Mrs. Lisle in "State Trials" is utterly worthless, and he does so merely by pointing to the fact that it was not published until 1719. He says that Jeffreys reprieved Mrs. Lisle after sentence for five days in order that she might appeal to the King, and that this showed that "Jeffreys was no enemy of Mrs. Lisle"! He forgets to say that, in fact, he ordered her to be executed on the same afternoon as the sentence, and that it was only "upon the intercession of some divines of the church of Winchester" that she was respited for five days. The allegations that Jeffreys induced the accused to plead guilty by promising pardon if they did so, is confirmed by the book of Henry Pitman—Mr. Muddiman's comment is: "Jeffreys was sincere in making these promises." There is nothing like giving a judge the benefit of every doubt, even though the judge does not appear to have treated in the same way the 233 unfortunate persons whom in one day he sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered at Taunton.

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

THE STRICKEN DEER

The Stricken Deer; or the Life of Cowper. By DAVID CECIL.
(Constable. 15s.)

THE curious "pull" which the eighteenth century exercises over the twentieth has been, and may be, explained in various ways. It can hardly be the attraction of affinity. There is really more in common between our unquiet, questioning, over-coloured, high-pitched age and the age of Elizabeth. Yet for the moment the Elizabethans are in partial eclipse, and on the sober, solid, symmetrical Augustans the beating light of posterity's attention is focused.

In his new life of Cowper, Lord David Cecil suggests that people like the Augustan Age "because they see it as the Golden Age of the qualities they value; and so they conceive it as possessing those qualities and no others." And he goes on to demonstrate—that every student of the period ought to remember—that "even if the eighteenth century spirit, as we imagine it, was really prevalent in the eighteenth century, it would be as false to imagine it as exclusively prevalent as to imagine all the furniture was made by Sheraton and all the decoration done by Adam." Obviously no century can be neatly confined within its ten decades. There is none that does not straddle like a Colossus with one foot on the further and one on the nearer shore. This is especially true of the century which touches both the death of Dryden and the birth of Keats. Between those two points it shows infinite variety of colour, character, and form. Was it not called the Age of Reason, and did it not bring forth the Romantic and the Evangelical movements?

In approaching his subject, Lord David follows the excellent plan of those excavators who cut away the earth all round a primitive burial, and then, when they dispose the bones and the beads and the weapons under glass, leave below and on either side an undisturbed section of the geological deposit in which they were found. He does not try to detach the pitiful and endearing figure of Cowper from its environment. Instead, he takes a complete slice out of the period and plants Cowper in the middle. A biographer whose sense of proportion was less delicate might employ this method at his peril. Here the background is never allowed to invade the foreground, and Paolo Uccello himself never showed greater skill in foreshortening. *Come e bello il prospettiva!*

And *a propos* of perspective, let us turn aside for a moment and intercede for that much-maligned nobleman, Lord Chesterfield. In the present book it is implied, if not categorically stated, that Johnson attributed to his lordship "the manners of a dancing-master and the morals of a whore." Whereas all that the Doctor said was that these manners and these morals might be learned from the "Letters."

It is clear that Cowper's latest biographer is strongly attracted to him, and has approached him by every possible path and by-path. Instead of building up a gradual portrait, he confronts us betimes with a vivid impression of the poet in middle life, at the time when Romney sketched him:—

"The face is a plain, everyday sort of face, with ruddy, weather-beaten cheeks, and a wide, gentle mouth. The set of the lips, precise yet kindly, shows refinement, but it is an old-maidish kind of refinement; and the impression of old-maidishness is added to by the poet's curious headgear—a sort of homely English version of a turban, finished off on top with a neat white bow.

"But out of this face glance a pair of eyes which change its whole expression; startled, speaking eyes fixed on something outside the picture which we cannot see, in fear, in horror, in frenzy; luminous dilated orbs; the eyes of an artist, of a seer, can it be of a madman?"

From this point we are carried back to the parsonage at Berkhamsted and forward to the parsonage at East Dereham, the space between being peopled with lively and familiar figures. Newton and Hayley, Bull and Rose, Lady Austin and Lady Hesketh, those two laughing Queens who in turn caught Cowper's trembling hands, they all move and speak with the gestures and the accents of authentic life. If Mary Unwin is a little less convincing, that may be because there

was nothing quaint or absurd about her. She was simply good, and simple goodness is apt to be rather a grey and immobile quality when regarded from afar.

No chapter in this book is more satisfying than that on the Evangelical phase. Lord David is less severe than Mr. l'Anson Fausset upon that type of Calvinism which

"Filled Knightsbridge with illumination
And Bedlam with predestination";

but on the other hand he gets excellent fun out of the carpet-evangelists and their women-votaries:—

"Their language is as absurd as their thought. Elderly clerics write to young ladies to urge them not to use rouge in a style which combines but does not unite those of Jeremiah and the polite letter-writer. . . . The world of 'Tom Jones' is not most happily described in the language of the Book of Job. Elijah among the tea-cups cannot fail to be a comic figure."

Humour, sympathy, insight, and knowledge have all gone to the making of what is probably the best life of Cowper yet written. There is only one point upon which one feels inclined to break a lance with the author, and that is his assertion that "The Castaway" represents "the unique occasion" on which Cowper "enters the realm of great poetry." If to touch true greatness poetry must also touch sublimity, it may be that the poem in question stands alone. If the sublime pitch must be sustained from first to last, it does not stand at all. But if by "great poetry" we mean the fusion of passionate truth with poignant beauty, then surely Cowper's lines on his mother's picture cannot be excluded from its realm. Praised be heaven, it is a realm whose frontiers are both vague and wide!

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

RESTORATION TRAGEDY

Restoration Tragedy, 1660-1720. By BONAMY DOBRÉE. (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 7s. 6d.)

Dryden and Howard, 1664-1668. By D. D. ARUNDELL. (Cambridge University Press. 10s. 6d.)

MR. BONAMY DOBRÉE'S "Restoration Tragedy" concludes the excellent series of essays on the drama of the late seventeenth century, issued by the Clarendon Press, which includes his earlier study of "Restoration Comedy" and Mr. Bateson's "Eighteenth Century Comedy." The earlier volumes are recognized as the best introductions to their respective and much-neglected subjects; the latest deserves similar recognition. Indeed, if the end of writing were recognition, which, of course, it is not, then this volume would merit a larger share than its predecessors; or if gratitude of readers, and this is a more reasonable ambition, then Mr. Dobrée has earned his full share. For he has had to overcome two difficulties, one of them peculiar, the other general to his subject, or in other words, he has had to persuade his readers that not only is Restoration tragedy worth the study but the problem of tragic representation as well. At first this general difficulty of enlisting the sympathies of his readers on the side of dramatic tragedy may seem to be purely imaginary, unless we pause for a moment to consider into what neglect tragedy has fallen since the end of the seventeenth century. Except for a few pastiches, that are better read than acted, no great tragedy has been written in English for two hundred years, and in spite of Messrs. Galsworthy, Sherriff, and O'Flaherty, there seems to be no immediate likelihood of any being written. The taste for dramatic tragedy has been lost or sublimated elsewhere, and this is not the place to inquire its present whereabouts. But it is necessary to amplify Mr. Dobrée's broad assertion that "with the advance of democracy, tragedy, man's trial of his individual strength, is becoming increasingly unpopular, indeed incomprehensible." This is a good example of the kind of provocative statements that Mr. Dobrée flings out from time to time, and that add a great deal to the interest of his work; for in this particular instance one is tempted to rush in from the opposite side and maintain that with the advance of democracy, man's trial of his individual strength in the face of, or surrounded by, the advancing masses has never before been felt so intensely. The point, however, which we wish to make is that it is not so much from the advance of democracy as from the advance of the

novel that tragic drama has retreated. The heroic drama of the Restoration developed into domestic drama, and as soon as the protagonists ceased to be of heroic stature, they retreated from the footlights into the pages of the novel, where the tragic element in their lives could be built up little by little from a mass of small details, which on the stage might have seemed tedious, inappropriate, and even ridiculous. And having retreated, they were never again available for an English Chekhov or Ibsen.

The peculiar difficulty of Mr. Dobrée's subject is that scarcely anyone is interested in it. No school of English drama has been more neglected than the tragic writers of the Restoration; the epithet "artificial," whether applied to their odd conception of tragedy or to the means by which it was expressed, has effectually damned it in the eyes of succeeding generations, who have dismissed it as a literary curiosity. Perhaps it is too late now to hope that Mr. Dobrée's ardent and persuasive advocacy will revive an interest among a very wide public. If it was merely a matter of persuasion, then his gift of it would certainly create that public, but not even Dryden come from the dead could tempt more than a few enthusiasts to accept the attitude to life, or rather the values attached to love, honour, decorum, &c., that runs through heroic tragedy. What this attitude was, Mr. Dobrée shows in his first chapter, "The Necessity for Heroism"; how it arose from such causes as the dismal and thoroughly unheroic period of the Commonwealth, the unrefined manners of the Court, the elaborate and finicky operatic productions; and how from it were evolved the two qualities of heroic admiration and heroic love, counterparts of pity and terror, which with the central idea of poetic justice were the essential ingredients of the heroic play. The basis, in fact, of Restoration tragedy, as Mr. Dobrée points out, was the Romantic idea, since in spite of a more or less rigid adherence to the so-called classical rules of writing, its theme was supernatural and symbolic.

"The work of an heroic poem," according to Hobbes, "is to raise admiration, principally for three virtues, valour, beauty, and love," and the history of Restoration tragedy is, briefly, the combination in varying amounts in different writers of these virtues; its decline, the gradual disappearance, in favour of love, of heroic valour, which was adequately supplied by the Duke of Marlborough, and the instant popularity of the *sunt lacrimæ rerum* view of tragedy. But this brief history would not be complete without a reference to the once famous dispute between the upholders of the heroic couplet against those of blank verse, culminating in 1668 in Dryden's "An Essay of Dramatic Poesy." This essay, together with all the controversial matter by Dryden and Howard that surrounds it, has been collected into one volume by Mr. Arundell, who also prints Dryden's "The Indian Emperor," and Howard's "The Duke of Lerma," the former in couplets, the latter in blank verse, as examples of the two theories. These are useful texts to have together, and they are not complicated with any editorial matter worth mentioning. We must protest, however, against what seems to be a stupid innovation without precedent or sufficient justification: that of printing full-stops as four dots, commas as three, &c., whenever the editor considers the usual stopping convention insufficient as a guide to sense. Really there is no advantage to be gained by this substitution of quantitative for qualitative punctuation, unless it is that the people who always read verse carelessly (and they are not likely to buy this book) will no longer have the excuse of saying that they did not notice the full-stop. Apart from the dots, Mr. Arundell's book is a useful companion to Mr. Dobrée's. Most of the texts to which Mr. Dobrée refers are available, and we hope that his fluent and pleasant essay will encourage people to return to them. One other service he could do his readers, by persuading the Clarendon Press to reprint North's, Shakespeare's, and Daniel's accounts of "Antony and Cleopatra" in one volume, with, as an introduction, the fourth chapter of the present book "Cleopatra and 'That Critical Warr,'" which has already been printed in the TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, and which, though it stands somewhat apart from the other chapters, is one of the best things that Mr. Dobrée has ever written.

THREE WAR BOOKS

Good-bye to All That: An Autobiography. By ROBERT GRAVES. (Cape. 10s. 6d.)

The Fiery Way. By FRANZ SCHAUWECKER. Translated by T. W. H. HOLLAND. (Dent. 6s.)

Gallipoli Memories. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)

THE steady flow of war books is proof that we have now got far enough away from those nightmare years to want to examine that experience, and it is just as well that such books should not all be of the same type. There is already a serious danger in that the great majority of war books are pacifist, for this makes us apt to forget the elements in man's make-up that cause him to desire war. The danger does not come so much from the regular soldier, often the mildest of warriors; seasoned majors might in 1914 be heard telling newly joined fire-eaters that war was a dirty business, and the sooner this one was over the better. The danger lies in the almost mystic need of man to test himself against horror; war is still the supreme experience to multitudes of men, and the assurance that they can master fear an everlasting necessity. If we forget this, and come to believe that all men think that war means only degradation, we shall be lulled into false security.

These three books are diverse enough. Mr. Mackenzie deals mainly with the espionage side of the war, and he makes it vastly entertaining with his vivid sketches of Sir Ian Hamilton, Lord Lloyd, Mr. Heathcote Smith, and so on; and lively, novelistic portraits of suspects such as the unfortunate Vassilaki, and agents such as the farcical Vedova. Not having been a fighting soldier, he is not pacifist; his pictures of the Gallipoli fighting tell one nothing of the inward torment: but he exhibits a certain bitterness against the bungling and the something not far from dishonesty which prolonged the war. All will not agree that had the Gallipoli campaign succeeded the war would have been shortened; but many of us felt as he did, and more bitterly, that the war, so far as it was a war of ideas, was lost when conscription came in, and the bullying of conscientious objectors began.

Mr. Graves, in his profoundly moving book, is, of course, pacifistic: he saw too much fighting not to be that. His is not only a war book, but the years 1914-1918 take up more than half of his autobiography. A deal of pother has been made about his "revelations," his frank statements as regards suicides, shootings, and so forth; but there are also splendid examples of unassuming heroism, and what emerges is love of mankind, pity, and comradeship; the sense of loathsomeness and futility is balanced by these, for it is absurd to suppose that the heart of man does not react warmly to these things that war brings out. It is an extraordinarily honest book; and if his attempted detachment is not carried far enough to make it a work of art, it has produced a book devoid of hate. It is the sort of book that is needed, for though it makes strongly for peace, it does not lose sight of the dangerous possibility of war, apart from political folly.

Whether Herr Schauwecker's book makes for peace is doubtful. It is a little difficult to grasp the attitude of mind which dictated this somewhat dithyrambic exploration of experience. That the patriotic exultation of the opening should finally dwindle to disillusion is not enough to make the book pacifist, for one knows that had victory been given to the Germans, the tone would have been different. There is hatred in this book, hatred of the French, and a curious fury against the inhumanity of enemy guns, but no sense that German gunnery was necessarily as inhuman. It differs greatly from Mr. Graves's book, for, unlike most English books, it is not filled with a realization of the idiocy and meaninglessness of it all, but expresses a search to find a divine meaning in the suffering God inflicted upon Germans.

Mr. Mackenzie's volume is the first of three which will no doubt be invaluable to the student of the war behind the fronts. It makes no attempt to be informed by deep emotion. Herr Schauwecker's has emotion, but it is not quite of the healthy kind. Mr. Graves's autobiography should be read and pondered by everybody as the fearless expression of a sensitive mind which will in no way juggle with rights

and wrongs; the book is for that reason one of the best deterrents from war that has yet been written.

BONAMY DOBRÉT.

A LESSON FOR PARENTS

The Child from Five to Ten. By EVELYN and MIRIAM KENWRICK. (Kegan Paul. 7s. 6d.)

"All children are by nature evil, and while they have none but the natural evil principle to guide them, pious and prudent parents must check their naughty passions in any way that they have in their power, and force them into decent and proper behaviour and into what are called good habits."

So wrote Mrs. Sherwood in "The Fairchild Family" a hundred years ago, and so, presumably, thought not only her readers but many a parent, governess, and nurse. Nowadays, more cheerfully, we believe that children, even though to the unsympathetic they seem grubby, untidy, noisy, possibly destructive, are full of potentialities for good, and if guided rather than driven, developed not repressed, ought to turn into fine, self-respecting human beings. Modern parents are expected to know not only about diet and sun-bathing, but even more to familiarize themselves with the newest views upon child psychology. The modern mother is as much concerned about repressions as she is about vitamins.

Will the Misses Kenwick's book help her? It might be such an excellent book, so useful, so encouraging. Its authors know a very great deal about children, and not a little about parents. They are full of a real love for children, a real care and understanding. There is in their book plenty of sensible observation, shrewd comment, and wise advice. For instance, "It is wiser to say, 'In five minutes I am coming back, and then the toys will be cleared away as it will be bedtime,' rather than 'Clear away your toys at once and come to bed directly.' The first method gives opportunity for the child to understand the command through the time allowed for preparation which is denied in the second." One of the hardest things for impatient grown-ups to understand is that they and the children live at different paces, and much friction results from the lack of that understanding. Again, people are often impatient because they do not comprehend clearly the different stages of the child's development. They know that it cannot walk before it has learnt to stand, but they do not realize that it is useless to expect a small child to possess the social instincts of its elders. The little child is absorbed in growing and discovering. Its play is its method of doing both these things. Life is a series of experiments. It is solitary. It often likes to watch others, but it does not want to play with them. Every mother knows how the babies' party resolves itself into a number of solitary babies, each busy with its own toy or its own occupation, and knows, too, the boredom which results from well-meant attempts to make baby "Play with the dear little girl, now, darling." Later on, perhaps at about eight years, the child's social instincts will awaken, and it will be ready for combined activities. It is no use trying to develop them too soon.

There is much that is wise, too, as to the transition from play at home to lessons in school, and the relation of lessons to play. Play is education to the young child, and the wise teacher is the teacher who knows how to guide the child across the bridge from play at home to play lessons and so to other lessons, in those first stages of school life which may be so trying and are always so important. Many a child suffers from bad management during this transition, and may go through life with an unnecessary hatred of books or of music due to mistakes at this stage of its career.

All this, and much more, is good, sensible, wise. But the book as a whole is disappointing. It is incoherent, much too full of very miscellaneous quotations, and the endless small anecdotes of children and mothers, referred to as Joan or Marjorie or what not, become tiresome. The writers know a great deal about children, but they have not learnt how to make their knowledge into a well-written book. If they had but found a colleague familiar with punctuation, paragraphing, condensation, and arrangement, they might have produced the book for which every young mother longs.

TWO HISTORIANS

The Seventeenth Century. By G. N. CLARK. (Oxford University Press. 15s.)

The Old Regime in France. By FRANZ FUNCK-BRENTANO. Translated by HERBERT WILSON. (Arnold. 16s.)

THE historian *pur sang* has need of an extraordinary collection of gifts; knowledge of many languages and immense reading are only the beginning; he must have, besides intellectual integrity, a certain quality of mind which, while it makes him abhor easy generalities and slipshod conclusions, gives him power to crystallize and make a significant thing out of the events which unwind from the endless reel beneath his eyes. One recognizes this quality in Mr. Clark. Perhaps the best way to define his achievement is to say that the time in his book is constant—that whether he is writing about Economic Policy and Ideas, or Frontiers, or Literature, or Armies, he is also writing about the seventeenth century. We gain from each separate essay, actually from the information on its specific subject, an idea of the contemporary world, until we finish by understanding that these kings, soldiers, priests, poets, and diplomats really were living in the same period, and know what the collection of circumstances and ideas was which bound them all more closely together than they can be bound, soldiers with soldiers, poets with poets, of other ages. We have, in fact, acquired a clearer conception of that vague ghost, the spirit of a past age, learned to recognize the main features of a civilization different from and yet the ancestor of our own. But the "spirit of an age" and "a vanished civilization" are dangerous terms; they have been applied to such fancy notions, such picturesque fallacies, so much nostalgic nonsense—though the seventeenth century does not seem to be as attractive a victim as the Middle Ages were some time ago, or as the eighteenth century now is—that in justice to Mr. Clark we must insist that they are not mentioned in his pages, and that what emerges is dim and commonplace enough in comparison with what they are usually made to stand for.

Much of an historian's work lies not in strengthening but in blurring an outline which has been formed by deposits of legend or tradition, or too arbitrarily drawn by writers whose imaginations are stronger than their consciences. "No country in modern Europe had a regular national census before the French Revolution. . . . No author of the seventeenth century made an attempt of any serious scientific value to discover the numbers of the inhabitants of the European countries in general." It is facts like these which we must face, admitting the limitations they impose upon whole departments of study, and therefore upon our theories. Everything we get from this book we get legitimately.

Mr. Clark is especially to be admired for the skill with which he disentangles the different skeins of seventeenth-century thought—the ideas which were relics of dying feudalism, the great mass, then forming, which went down, outworn, before the French Revolution, and the small residue, social rather than political, which has survived to this day. He shows them in relation to each other, and in motion, waxing or waning, for, as he says, "like all periods in which anything happened, this was a time of transition. . . . Any picture of the world at one moment is deceptive if it appears to be at rest. . . . The attitudes of the figures in it are not posed and held, but are at the beginning or middle of unfinished gestures. . . ."

It would be hard to find an historian, allowing the common possession of erudition, more different from Mr. Clark than is M. Funck-Brentano. "The Old Regime in France" is a big, untidy, delightful book. It is enough for M. Brentano if all information on, for instance, *Lettres de Cachet* be gathered into the chapter headed "Lettres de Cachet," indeed his divisions—"the Court," "the Seigneurie," etc.—are simply receptacles for the pell-mell piling up of the results of his tremendous researches. He leaps from Louis XVI.'s reign to Louis XIV.'s and back again in a single paragraph. He draws no conclusions, and is not concerned to draw any: "We are not seeking to convince, to prove, to make proselytes—here we are before

the documents we have collected. . . . His strong enthusiasm for the period is conveyed to the reader by means of a flood of facts, figures, and quotations, drawn from an enormous number of sources, and displayed with Gallic passion.

MALORY AS MORALIST

Malory. By EUGÈNE VINAVER. (Oxford Clarendon Press. 15s.)

To many it must seem a contradiction in terms to say that both Malory and Tennyson have a similar didactic purpose in their writings on the Arthurian Legend. What of one's cherished conviction that Tennyson in his "Idylls" is spoiling that true romantic tone which is to be heard sounding so clearly in Malory? Mr. Vinaver in his scholarly book would have us know that in his turn Malory in the "Morte Darthur" is changing, moralizing the romantic adventures and passionate loves of his French sources. "He shares the moderns' . . . misunderstanding of the mediæval romantic spirit. For the mediæval courtly idealism he attempts to substitute the philosophy of a practical and righteous fifteenth-century gentleman; and where the French romantic writers seek to set forth an ideal remote from reality he sees but a moral doctrine to be followed by all those who desire honour and 'renommée' in this world." And if, says Mr. Vinaver, "there are readers . . . to whom the 'Morte Darthur' still remains the apotheosis of chivalrous romance, it is because the work has preserved some remnants of the old and powerful stories which, stronger than Malory, have survived and conquered his prosaic realism."

What, then, did Malory achieve in his translations and redactions from "certeyne bookes of Frensshe"? As Mr. Vinaver points out very well, he re-established a new Arthuriad, turning the loose mass of the old romance into a national account of heroic deeds, in this following the English tradition of Layamon. And, secondly, he achieved—what, for all their truer romantic attitude the French romances failed to do—the perpetuation of the spirit of romance in England. This, of course, is largely through the magic of his style. Mr. Vinaver, although somewhat reluctant to make æsthetic pronouncements, nevertheless illustrates well some of the particular qualities of this magic, in especial, Malory's effective use of a balanced arrangement of rhythmical periods, the blending of lingering cadence with short phrase, two long periods enclosing two shorter ones, with a characteristic "dying fall" at the close.

However, a discussion of style forms but a small part of Mr. Vinaver's thesis. Possibly the most important chapter in the book is that entitled "Camelot and Corbenic," which deals with the distinction between the religious purpose expressed in the "Lancelot-Graal" section of the French prose cycle, and Malory's purpose. The Grail cycle always offers a fascinating field for speculation. Mr. Vinaver, perhaps wisely, confines himself to the specific distinction. On the one hand, in the French cycle, there is the condemnation of the Arthurian world, and in contrast to it, the exaltation of the spiritual chivalry embodied in the "pure knight." Malory, partly because of his moral purpose—the restoration of the ideals of knighthood in an age when only the outward show of them remained—partly, as Mr. Vinaver implies, because of a temperamental difference in outlook, ignores the mystical significance of the Grail episodes, and reasserts, instead of denying, the earthly virtues of Arthur and his knights. His concern was to make "noble men . . . take the good and honest acts in their remembrance and folwe the same." The lay reader may be inclined to think that Mr. Vinaver possibly stresses this point too emphatically, but he is convincing.

The book is for the scholar rather than for the general reader. Only the scholar indeed can appreciate fully the minute and exact researches contained in the appendix, especially in the chapter on the sources. But the argument throughout is clear and well-sustained, and is valuable as indicating a right approach to Malory. That it is a right approach Mr. Vinaver's book very clearly demonstrates.

NOVELS IN BRIEF

Young Vigilance. By RENÉ BOYLESVE. Translated by H. V. MARROT. (Mathews & Marrot. 10s. 6d.)

This volume contains translations of two novels, "La Becquée," first published in 1901, and the sequel to it, "L'Enfant à la Balustrade." Boylesve himself emphasizes the difference between his own work, with its sober, provincial setting, and the contemporary novel of Parisian manners. While he insists on the historical and sociological element in fiction, he contrives to subordinate it to his story, so that his book is free from unabsorbed lumps of theorizing. Perhaps his chief merit lies in the balance he strikes between the social historian and the novelist. The present work is a comparatively early example of the family novel. The action, which takes place in Touraine in the seventies, among the landowning and professional classes, is seen through the eyes of the child Riquet. The first novel centres round Félicie Planté, the capable owner of Courance, who supports a numerous family of thriftless aunts and uncles; the second deals mainly with the ruinous antagonism the lawyer Naudaud brings on himself by his acquisition of the Colivaut house, coveted by the powerful Plancoulaine. Some of the minor characters, especially Little Mummie and Marguerite Charmaison, in their relationship to the child, are humorously and touchingly done. In certain effects of characterization (Grandpapa Fantin) and atmosphere, the work bears some resemblance to Proust's. Boylesve is only a second-rate writer, but he is independent (the glimpse of the marching soldiers, at the beginning, is a pleasant indication of his attitude), authentic, and graceful. The translation is fair.

Pennagan Place. By ELEANOR CHASE. (Putnam. 7s. 6d.)

This is another specimen of the family novel. It bears a close resemblance, sometimes amounting to an unconscious similarity of phrasing, to some of its predecessors. For instance, the girl Curtis considers introducing her lover Alan to her family: "In order fully to know her he must know the Pennagan tribe, understand them as she understood them, and accept them as part of her background. But would he? Could he possibly? It seemed to her that if he could see them here in the frame of Pennagan Place he would understand. She looked back at the old house standing in the flecked moonlight, unchangeable, staunch, serene. What was it that drew her to it, what secret enchantment that tugged at her heart? . . . How strong that bond for the others, too, she was able to judge. It had drawn Lisa back from Vienna and held her now. No Pennagan, except Nick, had ever left it long of his own accord. And he wrote, from the wilds of Africa where he was building bridges, that he would return." But the Pennagans are too much at first for the dense prig of an Alan, although he is carried away by the disloyal little hypocrite of a Donna. Fortunately, he progresses; and Uncle Nick, when he does come home, puts everything right. The young people are much more interesting and original than their elders. Miss Chase prefers an immoral grandfather to a domineering matriarch. The novel is by no means without warmth and life.

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TRINCULO KEEPS A RECORD (I)

"WELL," said Trinculo on Saturday night, as, the last rubber ended, he made some rapid calculations on a slip of paper, "I've played thirteen rubbers this week, and I'm 694 points to the good."

"Not a bad result," said Prospero. "But, of course, Trinculo, you've held exceptionally good cards."

"As a matter of fact," said Trinculo, "I haven't. I've been doing what I'm always recommending you fellows to do when you generalize about luck—I've kept an exact record of what I've held. Would you like to hear what it is?"

"We should," we all replied. Trinculo's score-sheet, at the end of a rubber, is a mass of seemingly unintelligible hieroglyphics. It would be interesting to know what he got out of them.

"I've played thirteen rubbers, as I said before," began Trinculo. "That was sixty hands in all. Now, first of all, I kept a record of the number of court cards I held. Here

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it is, arranged in the form of a little table." And he passed round the following for our inspection:—

COURT CARDS HELD IN SIXTY CONSECUTIVE HANDS

Suit	A	K	Q	J	10	Total
♠	12	15	10	13	18	68
♥	15	14	15	13	13	70
♦	15	19	11	14	12	71
♣	13	16	16	11	9	65
Total	55	64	52	51	52	274

"To the statistically minded," said its author, "this chart explains itself. I had, as you can see, five Aces fewer than I ought to have had, four Kings more, and considerably fewer of the minor honours. I merely mention this to disprove the contention that my cards were particularly good."

"Then your partners' cards must have been quite exceptional," said Gonzalo. "Otherwise, you couldn't have been all those points to the good."

"I don't see that the conclusion follows from the premiss," answered Trinculo sweetly. "Some of us, perhaps, play better than others, and I may have been lucky in my partners. At the same time, you may be right; I kept no record of what my partners held. But there is just this piece of evidence to the contrary: that my partners and I only played twenty-nine hands out of the sixty; and that of those twenty-nine hands I myself played sixteen. Here is exhibit No. 2 for you." And he passed round another slip of paper:—

RESULTS OF SIXTY CONSECUTIVE HANDS

Played by	Successfully	Unsuccessfully	Total
Trinculo	13	3	16
Trinculo's Partners ..	10	3	13
Trinculo's Adversaries	21	10	31
Total	44	16	60

"Really" (Trinculo went on), "I attribute our success—as this table suggests—to—shall I say?—our more successful bidding. Our adversaries went down, approximately, on one hand in every three; I and my partners only on one hand in five. But there was—I should add—a contributory factor. I have shown that the *value* of the cards I held was rather below than above the average. On the other hand, I was relatively well off in the higher-valued suits. In sixty hands I held 780 cards; their suit distribution was as follows:—

Spades	...	...	...	...	203
Hearts	...	...	...	...	205
Diamonds	...	...	...	...	186
Clubs	...	...	...	...	186
Total	...	...	...	...	780

No doubt, this slight preponderance of the major suits was of some assistance to me and my partners in pushing our adversaries 'over the edge.' "

"Have you any evidence of that?"

"Certainly. We put our opponents down—as I have mentioned—ten times altogether. On six of these ten occasions, they were defeated on a call in a major suit. This shows—what, after all, common sense would in any case suggest—that a deficiency of court cards does not greatly matter if one is fortunate in one's holding of Spades and Hearts. Though of little use in attack, if the Aces and Kings are missing, they can be employed *defensively* with great effect."

(Other points of interest suggested by Trinculo's analysis will be dealt with in my article next week.)

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

TO wish a stockbroker a happy Christmas is, at the moment, to insult him. He will be thinking of what happened in the seven days preceding this ordinarily cheerful feast—the passing of the preference dividends by Royal Mail, Elder Dempster (these after being included in the provisional list of ex dividend announcements), and Inveresk Paper, followed by further signs of distress in these particular securities; the embargo on the export of gold from Argentina and the reaction in the Argentine dollar and the Brazilian milreis accompanied by the selling of Argentine and Brazilian bonds, Argentine and Brazilian railway stocks, and Brazilian Tractions; stormy and depressing meetings of companies (*vide* British Cement Products and Finance and Aerated Bread); a further relapse in tin; and finally, weakness in the industrial "leaders"—Courtaulds, Imperial Chemical, British-American Tobacco, Margarine, and Columbia Graphophones. At the back of these calamities is the general feeling that, with the whole world over-producing commodities and every industry toying with restriction schemes, commodity prices and security values must fall, that Great Britain in particular is heading for industrial bankruptcy, and that, if things are bad enough now, they will be worse next April when Mr. Snowden introduces his Budget. The broker, of course, loses sight of fundamental things—that gold is being shipped from New York in increasing quantities, that in the last three weeks the gold stocks of the Bank of England have risen by approximately £12,000,000 to £145,000,000, that industry can count upon a period of cheap money, and that the abuses which have marked company finance in the past two years are at last being stamped out.

The Inveresk Paper affair has a special interest. In September, 1928, Mr. William Harrison, who must take primary responsibility for the Company's present difficulties, purchased from the trustees of Sir David Yule and from Sir Thomas Catto control of the Daily Chronicle Investment Corporation which owns United Newspapers, Ltd., which, in turn, controls the DAILY CHRONICLE, the SUNDAY NEWS, the YORKSHIRE EVENING NEWS, the EDINBURGH EVENING NEWS, and the DONCASTER GAZETTE. Later on Mr. Harrison purchased control of the LANCASHIRE DAILY POST and the HULL DAILY MAIL, for which purpose we believe that he borrowed from the bank approximately £750,000. In January this year Provincial Newspapers, Ltd., was formed to take over these provincial newspapers and those of the Daily Chronicle group. By this time Mr. Harrison had also raised bank loans to provide the Daily Chronicle with new machinery for its plants in London and Leeds and to finance extensions to the plants of some of the Inveresk paper mills. The total of these bank loans is nearly £3,000,000. Provincial Newspapers intended to make a public issue which would have enabled Inveresk Paper to repay a portion of these loans. Unfortunately the collapse in the new issue market frustrated Mr. Harrison's plans. The issue of Provincial Newspapers was still-born.

One of the big five joint stock banks which advanced the £3,000,000 to Inveresk Paper has now become restive. It has refused to allow Inveresk Paper to pay its preference dividends, and it has installed a chartered accountant to watch its interests in the various companies. This gentleman has replaced Mr. Harrison as chairman of Inveresk Paper and of the Daily Chronicle Investment Corporation. The situation is complicated by the fact that the preference shareholders of Inveresk Paper claim that the raising of bank loans to the extent of nearly £3,000,000 was *ultra vires*. The bank is now trying to disentangle the various companies and set them up on their own financial legs. Clearly, this interlocking of companies is capable of great abuse, as we have seen in the case of the Horne group. But once again the big joint stock banks come very badly out of this affair.

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